

## NATO approves military force in Kosovo

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO on Saturday cleared the way for the use of military force to help impose a peace deal in Kosovo, authorising alliance Secretary General Javier Solana to launch air strikes against Yugoslav targets if necessary. "The Council today has agreed in authorising [to order] air strikes against targets in Yugoslav territory," Solana said in a brief statement to reporters. "I will take this decision in the light of both parties' compliance with international commitments, with international requirements, including in particular assessment by the Contact Group..."



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## Four killed in helicopter crash in Switzerland

SCHWYZ (AFP) — Four people were killed when their helicopter crashed into a mountain in the Schwyz canton in central Switzerland, police said Saturday. The cause of the crash, which occurred late Friday afternoon, is not yet known, police said. The pilot and three passengers were on a mission to set off explosions to unleash avalanches, a common method of ensuring safety on the ski slopes of Hoch-Ybrig, police said. It was not known whether the avalanches had begun at the time of the crash.

## Carlos denies Cuban connection

PARIS (AP) — The man known as Carlos the Jackal has denied allegations that Cuba was among his sponsors in the 1970s, saying such charges amounted to a "campaign of infamy" against Fidel Castro. In a letter to the daily *Le Monde*, parts of which were published Saturday, Illich Ramírez Sanchez — once considered the world's most wanted man — said he "never received logistical help from Cuba." The denial was in response to written allegations by a former ranking Cuban interior ministry official filed with French judicial officials in support of a law suit charging Castro with international drug trafficking and other crimes.

## Protesters clash over army exhibit

KIEL (AP) — Brawls erupted Saturday in the northern German city of Kiel between extreme rightists and leftists over an exhibition on World War II German army atrocities. Police did not have immediate information on the number of injuries or arrests. About 1,000 extreme rightists marched to protest the exhibition, which shows atrocities committed by ordinary German soldiers, as well as special SS units, in eastern Europe during the war. About 400 leftists pelted them with stones and clashed with police, who ordered the march route shortened to try to contain the violence.

## Explosion kills six people in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Six people were killed, including a four-year-old child, by a bomb which Pakistani officials said was made in neighbouring India. The bomb was placed beneath the seat of a horse-drawn cart that was carrying eight passengers. All but one of the passengers died of their injuries. The eighth person is in critical condition, police said. Seven other people, who were standing nearby, also were injured in the explosion, they said. The bomb exploded as the horse-drawn cart crossed a bridge near Sialkot, some 60 kilometers north of the Punjab provincial capital of Lahore.

## Eight hurt in N. Ireland attacks

BELFAST (AP) — Eight people were injured and a house set on fire as sectarian violence, attributed to Catholic and Protestant paramilitary forces, continued to flare in Northern Ireland overnight. In the first incident, a group of armed men beat up two women and five men, all in their twenties, in a house at Newtownabbey early Saturday. They then set the house on fire. One of the victims was hospitalised. In a separate incident a man in his thirties was shot and wounded when masked men broke into his home at Cookstown late Friday.

## Prince Abdullah, Arafat discuss peace process developments

By Tareq Ayyoub



HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent, receives Palestinian President Yasser Arafat at Raghada Palace in Amman on Saturday (AFP photo)

Oct. 23, 1998 agreement which His Majesty King Hussein and U.S. President Bill Clinton played a major role in concluding.

He also briefed the Crown Prince on Israel's decision to freeze the agreement and all issues the two sides had agreed upon, the ambassador told the Jordan Times, referring to the

Netanyahu halted further implementation due to the upcoming Israeli elections.

Khatib said President Arafat briefed Prince Abdullah on Israel's refusal to allow the Gaza seaport to begin operations in accordance with the Wye River agreement.

He said Prince Abdullah and Arafat also discussed the

forthcoming tripartite meeting of the foreign ministers of Jordan, Egypt and Palestine, expected to convene in Amman.

The ambassador said no date has been fixed for the ministers' meeting, but added that the focus of discussion will be on the logjam in the peace process.

## King completes course of treatment at Mayo

By Caroline Faraj

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday completed a course of chemotherapy and is scheduled to undergo a bone marrow transplant on Tuesday, Jordanian Ambassador to the U.S. Marwan Muasher said.

The King completed Saturday a four-day course of chemotherapy, and he will undergo a bone marrow transplant on Tuesday, which is supposed to last for two days, Muasher told the Jordan Times in a telephone interview from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

The King's private physician, Samir Faraj, yesterday said the King was in stable condition.

"His Majesty's health condition is stable, and the bone marrow transplant, due to last for two days, will take place on Tuesday, as part of the treatment plan," Faraj said.

On Friday Muasher told the Jordan Times that the King was scheduled to receive a course of chemotherapy as part of a

10-day treatment programme intended to achieve a more successful remission.

King Hussein underwent six months of treatment at the Mayo Clinic for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma before making a triumphant return to Jordan on Jan. 19, but his doctors' concerns over a recurrent fever and blood count abnormalities forced him to return last Tuesday to the U.S. for further medical attention.

When asked when doctors estimated the King's treatment would be completed, Muasher said: "The doctors' assessment of the King's condition is conducted on a daily basis."

The ambassador also described the King's general condition as better, and said: "The King is in constant contact with HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent."

"The King was briefed by Crown Prince Abdullah about the present developments in Jordan, and he is giving his instructions and advice," he added.

King Hussein designated

his eldest son Prince Abdullah as heir to the Throne on Monday, replacing his uncle, HRH Prince Hassan, 51, who had been heir for more than three decades.

Abdullah, who turned 37 on Saturday, is serving as Regent in the King's absence.

The King had received a stem cell transplant following six courses of chemotherapy which began last July. The 63-year-old Monarch announced at the end of that treatment that he had fully recovered. But when symptoms of fever and blood count abnormalities were indicated last week, his physicians said they were taking no chances and recommended that he return to the clinic.

King Hussein's non-Hodgkin's lymphoma is his second bout with cancer in six years. He underwent surgery at the Mayo Clinic in 1992 to remove his left kidney and cancerous cells from his ureter.

In April 1998, surgeons at the Mayo Clinic removed a benign growth from his prostate.

## Regent expresses appreciation for congratulatory messages

### IAF congratulates Crown Prince on designation as heir

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent, Saturday thanked the Jordanian people for their good wishes and congratulations upon becoming heir to the Throne.

In a letter to the nation, the Crown Prince also voiced his deep appreciation and gratitude to the heads of state and senior officials as well as citizens of Arab and foreign countries who congratulated him on this occasion.

"I am pleased to send greetings to all members of the Jordanian family and to express deep pride in His Majesty King Hussein's clan, who have expressed their affection to the Monarch and the nation and vowed to uphold the sublime principles on which the homeland was founded and the great message to which Jordan has

dedicated itself to achieve," the Regent said.

Referring to the past few days during which thousands of well-wishers assembled to congratulate him, Prince Abdullah said: "You have overwhelmed me with your noble and true feelings by calling at Raghada Palace from all parts of the country to express your sincere feelings and congratulations over the mission entrusted to me by His Majesty.

You have proved to be worthy of the King's trust and have displayed unity, cohesion and affiliation to the dear homeland and its noble message of defending the nation's causes and its future generations."

The cable said: "On behalf of the members and leaders of the IAF, I hereby send you my sincere, heartfelt congratulations on the Royal trust and on your appointment as Crown Prince, praying to God the Almighty to

protect you and keep you for the betterment of this country and its people."

The Regent also received several representatives of Arab leaders, who congratulated the Prince on his designation as heir to the Throne, and inquired about His Majesty King Hussein's health. The Regent received Prince Abdul Aziz Ben Abdullah Al Saud, the son of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah and a Saudi royal court advisor, Omani court minister and Sultan Qaboos Ben Saeed's special envoy, Major General Ali Ben Majed Mousavi. Sheikh Tamim Ben Khalifa, the son of Qatar's Emir Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani, and Al Sa'idi Qadafi, the son of Libyan President Muammar Qadafi.

Prince Abdullah also received congratulatory cables

on the occasion of his 37th birthday, which he celebrated Saturday. Messages were sent by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, Senate President Zaid Rifai, the president of the Judicial Council and Court of Cassation, Taher Hikmat, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mina' Kaabneh, Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani, the director of the General Intelligence Department, Major General Samir Battikh, Public Security Department Director General Major General Nasoush Muheiddin, Chief Islamic Justice and the King's advisor for Islamic affairs Izzeddin Khatib Tamimi, Lower House Speaker Abdul Hadi Majahid and Jordanian Businessmen Association President Hamdi Tabba.

tour of several Gulf countries, except Kuwait, last October.

Earlier, Khatib told the Jordan Times that during his visit to Kuwait, "we will be discussing all files related to our brotherly relations, and ways and means of improving them for the benefit of our peoples."

Meanwhile, the families of eight Jordanian prisoners in Kuwait have been urging the two governments to focus on their release.

Nabil Talhouni, the last ambassador to the Gulf emirate, is scheduled to leave for Kuwait today in order to prepare for the reopening of the embassy there, expected to take place during Khatib's visit.

However, diplomatic sources at the Kuwaiti embassy in Amman said they expected that Kuwait will release the remaining prisoners on Kuwait's National Day, which falls on Feb. 25.

Talhouni, 55, is the head of the Economics Department at the Foreign Ministry. He formerly served as Jordan's ambassador to Kuwait until the embassy was closed at the end of the Iraqi occupation.

During the Gulf crisis, Kuwait downgraded ties with Jordan after it accused Amman of supporting Iraq. But relations between Amman and Kuwait began to thaw in late 1995 when Jordan began to distance itself from Baghdad, calling on Iraq to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions.

## Arab interior ministers condemn 'all forms' of terrorism

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Arab interior ministers on Saturday ended a two-day meeting with a strong denunciation of terrorism and a call on Arab states not to allow terrorists to take shelter in their territories.

The final communiqué of the conference, which was attended by 22 Arab ministers, also urged Arab states to refrain from extending any type of assistance to terrorists or to benefit from their rules or to obtain assistance or arms, or practise any criminal acts or disseminate

propaganda that endangers the security and safety of all countries," the statement said.

It noted that Arab states differentiate between terrorism and "the right of people to struggle against foreign aggression and occupation by all means, including armed struggle to liberate their [occupied] lands."

The last part of the communiqué referred to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Lebanese territories.

The conference, which was inaugurated by HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the Regent,

was scheduled to last for three days but participants, for unspecified reasons, shortened it to two days.

Saudi Interior Minister Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz, who met on Saturday with Prince Abdullah, told reporters that Arab states were determined to "activate" the anti-terrorism strategy in the coming few months after it is ratified by their respective states.

Only four countries, namely Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Sudan, Algeria, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, have so far ratified the agreement, which was signed

by all Arab states.

The Saudi minister attributed the delay in ratification to "technical reasons and laws of some Arab states."

The secretary general of the Council, Ahmad Salem, denied that the delay was due to "reservations" by some Arab states to the strategic accord.

"All Arab states are supporting the agreement. There is a consensus among Arab countries to uproot this phenomenon from our region," Salem told the press following the conference.

(Continued on page 2)

## U.S. warplanes attack six sites in northern no-fly zone in Iraq

### Agencies

U.S. PLANES flying from a base in southern Turkey attacked six air defence sites in northern Iraq on Saturday, the U.S. Air Force said.

The air strikes, which marked an escalation of attacks in the no-fly zone, began around 3 p.m. Iraqi time (1300 GMT) after Iraqi radar targeted the U.S. aircraft, according to statements from a joint Turkish-U.S. airbase at Incirlik, southern Turkey.

"Coalition aircraft were targeted by Iraqi radars near Mosul while conducting routine enforcement of the northern no-fly zone," the base said.

The aircraft, acting in self-defence, launched strikes on a radar site and its missile launchers, four anti-aircraft missile sites and a surface-to-air missile site in the Mosul area.

Damage to Iraqi forces was being assessed, the base said.

American and British warplanes have enforced the no-fly zone north of the 36th Parallel since the 1991 Gulf War to protect the Kurdish population there from attack by Iraqi government forces.

U.S. aircraft have launched a series of air strikes on Iraqi air defences in northern and southern Iraq in recent weeks.

An Iraqi military statement said Saturday's attacks had been carried out with 17 missiles or bombs.

A spokesman told the Iraqi News Agency that 12 formations of warplanes had entered Iraq from Turkey backed by an AWACS radar plane.

He said that allied fighter planes had also been in action in the southern no-fly zone after taking off from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

He said that these had comprised 14 formations of warplanes, again with AWACS radar backing.

Those from Kuwait carried out 16 sorties and those from Saudi Arabia 20 sorties, he said, without giving

more details of their actions.

"The hostile planes fled back to the evil dens they came from," the spokesman said.

Iraq said on Saturday it had defused an unexploded cruise missile fired by U.S. planes at its northern oil-rich city of Kirkuk.

The Incirlik base was briefly put on a state of alert on Thursday on fears of an Iraqi missile attack, which proved to be unfounded. Earlier in January the United States moved a battery of Patriot missiles to Incirlik at Turkey's request.

(Continued on page 2)

## French MPs condemn strikes

BAGHDAD (AP) — The head of a visiting French parliamentary delegation on Saturday condemned the U.S.-led air strikes on Iraq, saying they would only complicate efforts to resolve the crisis.

"Nothing justifies the American strikes on Iraq," MP Rose-Jane Bacholle-Narquin told a press conference.

French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine, who is leading the delegation, said: "They will only complicate any future peace process." Bacholle-Narquin said the meeting between the French and Iraqi foreign ministers had been "productive." The two sides came to an agreement on the principles of a political dialogue between Iraq and the international community.

French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine said: "The political dialogue between Iraq and the international community must be continued."

French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine said: "The political dialogue between Iraq and the international community must be continued."

## 'Alleged Tunisian associate of Ben Laden held in Pakistan'

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Pakistani authorities have arrested a Tunisian national suspected of being a close associate of Saudi dissident Osama Ben Laden, a newspaper reported Saturday.

Quoting official sources, Dawn newspaper from Karachi said a team of security agencies including the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) had been formed to interrogate the Tunisian, identified as Al Babour Habib.

Babour was arrested at the Karachi airport as he arrived from London via Kuwait, the report said, adding the suspect planned to travel to Afghanistan to meet Ben Laden.

Afghanistan's ruling Taliban militia has rejected the allegations against their "guest" and refused to expel him.

In August the United States launched cruise missile attacks on alleged training camps of Ben Laden in Afghanistan.

Ben Laden has been

indicted in the United States for allegedly masterminding last year's twin bombings in Tanzania and Kenya that killed more than 200 people.

Afghanistan's ruling Taliban militia has rejected the allegations against their "guest" and refused to expel him.

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## Iranian president set to visit Germany — report

BONN (AFP) — German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder is "delighted" at a planned visit by Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, spokesman Bodo Hombach was quoted Saturday as saying.

Chancellery Minister Hombach is set to travel to Tehran next week when he will hand over an invitation from Schroeder for Khatami to visit Germany in the spring, the daily *Die Welt* reported.

Khatami's European trip is also expected to take in Italy and France.

While in Tehran, Hombach will seek to improve

economic and cultural ties, as well as pave the way for a Khatami visit, the paper said.

However the minister would not confirm that the Iranian president would receive a formal invitation.

Another point of concern for Germany, and Hombach, is the case of Helmut Hofer, German businessman who faces the death penalty in Iran.

Hofer was sentenced to death early last year for having an affair with a Muslim woman, not permitted under the laws of Iran's Islamic Republic. *Die Welt* saw Hombach's

visit as a sign that the Hofer matter will be happily resolved.

Twenty years after the Islamic revolution, Iran has toned down its harsh rhetoric and shifted its goal from exporting its radical ideology to seeking more normal relations with the rest of the Muslim World.

It was not until Khatami's election in May 1997 that Iran managed to charm the outside world with its detente policies, trying to reintegrate the country into the world community.



Two masked members of the Hamas sham the way Palestinian policemen treat their prisoners on Saturday during a demonstration in the West Bank town of Nablus, to protest against the detention of Hamas members in Palestinian-controlled jails (AFP photo)

## American public supports Palestinian state — poll

AMMAN (J.T.) — By a margin of more than two to one, American voters overwhelmingly support U.S. recognition of Palestinian statehood, according to a poll commissioned by the Arab American Institute (AAI) and conducted by Zogby International of Utica, New York, an AAI statement said.

The Jan. 28 poll surveyed 1,011 likely voters. When asked the question, "If the Palestinians declare an independent state, should the United States recognise it or not," 54.5 per cent said that the United States should recognise a Palestinian state, while only 21.2 per cent said the United States should not, and 24.3 per cent were not sure. The poll margin of error is +/- 3.2 per cent.

While Americans support a Palestinian state by a huge margin, some con-

gressional leaders continue to propose legislation opposing Palestinian self-determination, the statement said.

The proposed resolution circulated by Matt Salmon (R-AZ) and Eliot Engel (D-NY) calls on the Clinton administration to unequivocally assert U.S. opposition to the unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state.

Because the Palestinians have indicated that they would only make their declaration of statehood when the Oslo process expired, such language is uncalled-for, one-sided and in direct opposition to agreements brokered and signed by the United States. Congressional language that pressures one party or unilaterally adds new conditions to negotiated agreements only undercuts the administration's authority to conduct foreign policy and its role

as honest broker.

Not only do Congress actions hamper the peace process, they fly in the face of U.S. public opinion. AAI President James J. Zogby stated. Instead of trying to add new conditions to U.S. brokered agreements, Congress should support the administration position that all parties implement their obligations to the Wye and Oslo agreements so that this peace process can be concluded by May 4, 1999.

Instead of taking one side

and applying pressure only to the Palestinians, Congress should listen to the views of their constituents who overwhelmingly support a fair and just solution to the Middle East peace process which includes security for Israel and a Palestinian state, Zogby told reporters.

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 16, Aqaba 22. Humidity readings: Amman 27 per cent, Aqaba 19 per cent.

Following are the temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun 05/13  
Jerash 07/18  
Um Qays 06/17  
Madaba 05/18  
Petra 06/18  
Dead Sea 13/25

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WEATHER  
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

## Arab interior ministers condemn 'all forms' of terrorism

(Continued from page 1)

"There is no reservation from any member to any article of the agreement, and the ratification of the treaty is nothing but a matter of time," he said.

He said a draft plan that

would govern the extradition of criminal suspects among Arab states is under study by member states of the council.

The final draft has not been finalised. It is a matter of time before we come up with the plan, which is aimed at preventing evil elements from travelling among Arab states and taking shelter in these countries," Salem told reporters.

"All members are concerned

"We are keen on extraditing criminals and on strengthening control measures on our borders in order to stem the illegal trafficking of weapons, ammunition and explosives that could be used for terrorist acts," he said.

The final communiqué also urged Arab states to extend all facilities to Arab citizens wishing to obtain visas to travel among Arab countries.

The conference also

approved a memorandum of understanding to intensify cooperation between the council and the Ottawa-based International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol).

The communiqué also called for extending assistance to the Palestinian National Authority

for the security and stability of Arab states because the internal security of any member state is part of the overall Arab security.

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approved a memorandum of understanding to intensify cooperation between the council and the Ottawa-based International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol).

The communiqué also called for extending assistance to the Palestinian National Authority

police and endorsed several other agreements related to terrorism, drug trafficking and security cooperation among member states.

Also Saturday, Prince Abdulla met with several of the Arab interior ministers, who

expressed their appreciation to the Kingdom for hosting the conference.

Among those who met the Crown Prince were: Hussein Mohammad Harb of Yemen, Mohammad Ben Khalifah of Bahrain, Idris Basri of Morocco, Mohammad Badi of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammad Khalid Al Sabah of Kuwait, and Abdul Malik Salal of Algeria.

The Iraqi press and officials have launched

Iraqi papers say Saudi too weak to stop U.S.

BAGHDAD (R) — The Iraqi press accused Saudi Arabia on Saturday of being too weak to stop U.S. and British warplanes using the kingdom as a launch pad for patrols of the no-fly zone in southern Iraq.

The government newspaper Al Jumhouriya said the Saudis had "expressed their weakness and do not have the political will" to prevent Washington and London from using their air bases.

"We are surprised at what a Saudi source had said that his country was not able to prevent so-called international monitoring of Iraqi airspace," the official Al Qadissiya daily said, quoting a culture and information ministry spokesman.

"Doesn't this Saudi regime's weakness and loss of will mean that it is in fact under American military occupation?" the spokesman said.

Al Qadissiya said Iraq should be allowed to develop its defensive abilities like neighbouring states.

"Those who have [political] goals in Iraq and their supporters have prevented Iraq importing weapons and prevented it improving its conventional military abilities while Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran and Turkey were allowed to do so," the paper said.

The Iraqi press and officials have launched scathing attacks on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in recent weeks for providing logistical support for U.S.-led bombing raids on Iraq in December, the most severe offensive since the 1991 Gulf War.

Iraq's parliament on Wednesday accused the Kuwaiti and Saudi governments of being agents of the United States and Britain, and urged Arabs to overthrow the two regimes.

## U.S. planes attack six sites in northern Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

In the first of Saturday's attacks, a U.S. Air Force F-15E Strike Eagle launched an AGM-130 missile at a radar site. Two F-15Es dropped two more on an anti-aircraft artillery system and associated radar.

Turkey backs the Northern

Watch operation enforcing the no-fly zone, but Turkish

time, a group of F-15E Strike Eagles dropped two bombs on an Iraqi surface-to-air missile site after being targeted. Near the same time, F-15Es dropped two more on an anti-aircraft artillery system and associated radar.

Turkey backs the Northern Watch operation enforcing the no-fly zone, but Turkish

officials have expressed concern about the rising level of conflict.

A Turkish newspaper on Saturday quoted President Suleyman Demirel as saying he had warned U.S. President Bill Clinton against the consequences of his administration's plans to support Iraqi opposition groups in a

bid to overthrow President Saddam Hussein, drawing a parallel with the Vietnam war.

"Let me tell you one thing — this business resembles Vietnam. I said this to President Bush and I said it to Clinton," Demirel was quoted as telling reporters normally at a cocktail party.

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PROGRAMME TWO

16:10 Cartoon — The Pink Panther Tel. 4624853/4624811.  
16:20 ..... The Pumpkin Patch  
16:30 ..... Lift Off  
17:00 ..... Doc. — Survival  
17:30 ..... Vid Kids  
18:00 ..... Le Grand Secret  
19:00 ..... Le Journal  
19:15 ..... French Programme  
19:30 ..... News Headlines  
19:35 Corneby — If Not For You  
20:00 ..... French Programme  
20:30 Drama — Walker, Texas Ranger  
21:15 ..... Doc. — Eating and Health  
21:30 ..... Behind the Scenes  
22:00 ..... News in English  
22:30 ..... Bitter Blood  
23:10 Drama — Doogie Howser  
23:59 ..... End of TX.

PRAYER TIMES

05:07 ..... Fajr  
06:26 ..... (Sunrise) Dhuhr  
11:49 ..... Dhuhr  
14:46 ..... Asr  
17:12 ..... Maghreb  
18:31 ..... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Tel. 5920740  
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590  
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4611246

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

AMMAN:

Firas Pharmacy ..... 5661912  
Al Salam Pharmacy 4636730

Mayada Pharmacy ..... 5537004

Rukn Al Dawa Pharmacy 5536169

IRBID:

Dr. Mohammed Al Shari' (02)710088

Fou'ad Pharmacy (02)275360

ZARQA:

Dr. Khalil Abu Hussein (09)985001

Palestine Pharmacy (09)983562

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ..... 4637111

Civil Defence Department ..... 5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue ..... 4630341

199:00

Civil Defence Emergency ..... 199

Rescue Police, 192, 4621111-4637777

Fire Brigade ..... 4617101

Blood Bank ..... 4775121

Highway Police ..... 5343402

Traffic Police ..... 4893490

Public Security Dept. ..... 4630321

Hotel Complaints ..... 5605800

Price Complaints ..... 5661176

Water & Sewerage Complaints 4897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111

AMMAN:

Telephone Information (directory assistance) ..... 121

Overseas Calls ..... 0132

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 4623101

WEATHER

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Jordan Television ..... 4773111  
Radio Jordan ..... 4774111  
Water Authority ..... 5680100

J. Electricity Authority ..... 5815615  
Electric Power Co. ..... 4636381

RJ Flight Information ..... 44-53200

Queen Alia Int'l. Airport ..... 44-53200

Queen Alia Int'l. Airport ..... 44-53200

Speciality Hospital ..... 02/7103100

Other Flights

12:30 ..... Aden (IY)

14:35 ..... Istanbul (TK)

18:00 ..... Dubai, Damascus (EK)

18:40 ..... Beirut (ME)

18:45 ..... Kiev (GU)

## Brotherhood hails appointment of Crown Prince Abdullah, requests meeting to address political, economic issues

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Muslim Brotherhood has hailed His Majesty King Hussein's decision to appoint HRH Prince Abdullah, the Regent, as Crown Prince, and reiterated its allegiance to the Hashemite Throne.

"King Hussein has acted within his constitutional rights by changing the line of succession to the Throne, and we wish Crown Prince Abdullah all success," Abdul Majeed Thneihat, the overall leader of the Brotherhood, was quoted as saying in the Arabic press on Saturday.

Thneihat, who paid tribute to HRH Prince Hassan for his service to the nation during more than three decades as Crown Prince, said he asked Prince Abdullah for a

meeting when he joined the thousands of Jordanians of all walks of life to congratulate the new Crown Prince at Raghada Palace on Thursday.

Prince Abdullah, who has represented Jordan and the King in many missions abroad, especially dealing with security and military issues, and has long served behind the scenes, was appointed as Crown Prince last week.

"I hope a meeting can be arranged soon, so that we can explain our positions and give our suggestions," Thneihat was quoted as saying.

The Brotherhood stressed that neither its policies nor its educational, political, and charity activities will change.

The powerful movement, which was allowed

to work as a "charitable organisation" through the 1957-1989 martial laws and grew deep roots in Jordanian social fabric, has long campaigned for political reforms and fiercely opposed the 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

"There is a national Islamic need to review the country's policies, especially regarding relations with other Arab countries and the Zionists," Thneihat said.

"While we demand the abrogation of the Wadi Araba [peace] treaty with Israel, we also ask the government that [the treaty] be immediately preempted and Zionist infiltration stopped,"

The Brotherhood's leader maintained in the interview with the Arabic press that the peace treaty

created imbalance and frustration, which was manifested in a regression of public freedoms, rising unemployment, skyrocketing crime, and social, media, and moral corruption.

The Muslim Brotherhood reiterated its call for a comprehensive review in the political and economic spheres, emphasising the need to reactivate civil society institutions and enhance their role.

Thneihat highlighted the urgency of enacting a new elections law to guarantee fair and democratic elections and ensure the government's neutrality during all phases of the electoral process.

The Brotherhood's leader strongly opposed the dissolution of the current 13th Parliament and

the convening of early parliamentary elections — an idea recently floated in some opposition and government circles — before a more modern and democratic electoral law is drafted, debated, and endorsed.

"The Islamic movement has been targeted," Thneihat denounced, "with the precise objective of reducing its power and influence."

He criticised a new draft law dealing with Awqaf, which he said "will put all the workers of Islam under the umbrella of the Awqaf Ministry, thus narrowing the scope of their activities and reducing their work within rigid government regulations and bureaucracy."

## Jordan starts trade talks in Baghdad, looks for joint venture opportunities

BAGHDAD — A Jordanian delegation started talks in Baghdad on Saturday to boost trade between the two neighbouring countries.

"Iraq endeavours to expand and develop fields of economic and trade cooperation with Jordan," the Iraqi News Agency (INA) quoted Iraqi Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh as saying in the meeting with the Jordanian team.

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Industry and Trade Mohammad Halqa said his delegation would

discuss how to encourage the establishment of joint companies and expand exports, INA said.

Iraq

and Jordan agreed

last year to build a \$350-million, 750-kms oil pipeline linking the Iraqi pumping station of Haditha northwest of Baghdad to Jordan's Zarqa oil refinery northeast of Amman.

INA quoted Saleh as saying Iraq wanted cooperation to go beyond agreements made so far.

Since the Gulf War over

Kuwait, Iraq has been

exporting more than

75,000 barrels of oil per day to Jordan, part of which is charged at market prices and the rest at undisclosed softer terms.

Jordan's oil purchases from Iraq are exempted from U.N. sanctions which ban Baghdad from exporting oil as punishment for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The United Nations has allowed Iraq since December 1996 to sell limited quantities of oil to buy food and medicine for Iraqis.

## 10,000 fans pack the hall to see Fairouz live

By Susan Resheq

AMMAN — More than 10,000 fans of Lebanon's diva Fairouz, including many Israeli Arabs, flocked to her first two performances in Amman in 16 years, organisers said on Saturday.

The crowd, which jammed the legendary singer's concert at a new multi-purpose sports and cultural centre at Amman Private University on both Thursday and Friday night, also included HRH Prince Firas, Prime Minister Fayed Tarawneh and other top officials and politicians.

"My dream to hear and to see Fairouz is finally fulfilled," said Yaser Sabra, an Israeli Arab who crossed the border from the Mediterranean city of Haifa with a group of 100 friends to attend the concert.

"She is one of the few remaining legendary Arab singers and I am happy I had the chance to see her perform live after having bought and played each tape cassette since she began her career," said his wife Salma, whose bands were swaying to the tunes played by her veteran band of musicians.

"This is real classy Arabic music...just listen to the words of her songs and to the composition of the music," she told the Jordan Times. "It compares to nothing made by today's novice and commercial singers."

Seven local tour operators managed to attract over 3,000 Israeli Arabs who live in what was once British-mandated Palestine — a feat made possible by Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

The King wished Jordanian athletes success in their endeavours and further efforts towards improvements and achievements.

Palestinian flag.

Over 100 Israeli Arabs rushed to Fairouz's sister, Huda — who sat amidst the crowd — to shake hands with her or seek her autograph.

Organisers rejected complaints made by many members of the audience who had to scramble to get in through crowded gates and then to dissuade people to move from seats originally allocated to them.

"This is not true," said Jamal Miri, the university's marketing manager when asked about popular complaints over unprofessional organisation and lack of order.

"Fairouz and her manager even indicated that these two concerts were among the best ever in terms of organisation and interaction between the singer and the crowd," he told the Jordan Times.

They also had to wait longer than an hour until Fairouz was able to start the show, during which she appeared in five different long elegant robes with matching hair styles.

The Fairouz concerts, timed to coincide with His Majesty King Hussein's brief return to Jordan last week after receiving six months of chemotherapy treatment in a U.S. clinic, are part of a year-long plan of activities at the Arena Hall, among the most advanced sports facility in the region.

Fairouz left Amman on Saturday with the Al Hussein medal, bestowed on her by King Hussein, for distinguished performance and appreciation of her efforts to upgrade Arab arts. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Abdullah was present with her with the medal.

## Jordan's sound foundations ensure continuity

By Randa Habib  
Agence France Presse

AMMAN — Jordan, a country inextricably linked to its ruler King Hussein, has been built on a set of strong yet undeveloped institutions which experts believe will provide a firm base for the post-Hussein era.

King Hussein, who has ruled Jordan for more than 46 years "has built a real legal state over the years, based on a set of institutions with clearly-defined functions," said a former Jordanian official.

"Although these institutions have not been fully developed, they should provide a strong base for the development of Jordan," he said.

Jordan's Constitution — originally drafted in 1947, one year after the country gained its independence — grants the king extensive powers over the government but also provides for a clear "distribution of power" rather than absolute monarchy.

**'King Hussein has always wanted his country to reach a stage of political maturity that would allow him to create a constitutional monarchy'**

traditional pro-monarchy east Jordanian families who occupy the majority of key posts in the country.

A member of the king's entourage pointed out the practical reality of Jordanian politics.

"Unfortunately, although the constitution puts a lot of weight on the roles of the government and parliament, they have rarely played out their parts to the full," he said.

"Prime ministers have generally been paralysed, without the backing of an independent political force," he said.

But he said that whereas King Hussein's great charisma and political acumen have caused politicians to bow to what they believe to be his will, Crown Prince Abdullah may allow officials to take more initiatives when he becomes king.

King Hussein has always wanted his country to reach a stage of political maturity that would allow him to create a constitutional monarchy after

the example of Great Britain" where the monarch has a mainly symbolic role, he said.

The army is also controlled by the monarch who serves as supreme commander and appoints loyal soldiers to all the top ranks. The armed forces however, are not allowed to vote in elections. The judiciary, meanwhile, has proved its independence in recent years, with several supreme court rulings overturning government decisions such as a restrictive amendment to the press law last year.

"In times of crisis, the state's institutions work together with the prime objective of securing the country's stability," former prime minister Taher Masri said, and is expected to be the case in the future.

This was the case during the King's recent six month absence for cancer treatment in the United States, Masri said, and is expected to be the case in the future.

## King congratulates JTV

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein, currently undergoing chemotherapy at Mayo Clinic in the U.S., phoned Jordan Television to express appreciation of its Sports Magazine programme, wishing the programme continued success.

The King, who follows the Sports Magazine on JTV, Friday afternoon voiced satisfaction with its programmes which featured the contributions of HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, the

Regeot, to sports and athletic events in the Kingdom and presented prominent sport events at local, regional and international levels.

Prince Abdullah is chairing a special committee supervising the preparation for the 9th Arab Games due to be held in Amman this summer.

The King wished Jordanian athletes success in their endeavours and further efforts towards improvements and achievements.

## What's Going On

### Films

"Le Boucher" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh on Monday Feb. 1 at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

"The Godfather" (pt.II) at Books@Café, Jabal Amman at 8:30 p.m. (Tel. 4650458). (Part III will be screened on Monday Feb. 1 at 8:30 p.m.)

### Lecture

"The Educational Status and the Future Challenges" (in Arabic) by Minister of Education Dr. Fawzi Gharaibeh at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman on Monday Feb. 1 at 6:30 p.m.

### Exhibitions

"Winter 1998" exhibition at the Arts Centre, Shmeisani (Tel. 5529610), until Feb. 14.

Works by Mohammad Al Saifi at Books@Café, Jabal Amman, until Feb. 13 (Tel. 4650457).

"The Warm Winter" — works by several artists at Orfali Art Gallery, Um Uthaina (Tel. 5526932), until Feb. 1.

The Tenth Anniversary Exhibition of Contemporary Arab Artists at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh (Tel. 4643251/2), until Feb. 25.

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## UNMAS endorses Jordan's demining efforts

*'We think that the standards maintained by the Royal Corps of Engineers here are exceptional' — Fowler*

By Hind-Lara Mango

AMMAN — The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) concluded a one-week fact-finding mission in Jordan Saturday to assess humanitarian and socio-economic threats posed by the country's estimated 216,000 landmines.

"In our appraisal we gave priority to the socio-economic impact of landmines [in Jordan] as they directly affect the country's agriculture and tourism industries, which are two main currency generators for the economy," said Mary Fowler, UNMAS Deputy Chief and Policy Adviser.

The five-member UNMAS team represents a spectrum of U.N. organizations including the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF).

"The issue of landmines

is multi-faced and has implications concerning health, development, economy, and so forth," said Jorgen Lissner, UNDP resident coordinator in Amman. "This is why this mission is composed of a wide range of representatives."

At a press conference Saturday, the U.N. team said that during their visits with officials, they found that Jordan is "taking demining very seriously and was working hard to clear the Jordan Valley of these deadly weapons."

The team praised Her Majesty Queen Noor's efforts and her commitment to the landmine issue.

"Less attention is paid to these weapons of mass destruction... these indiscriminate killers constitute one of the greatest public health hazards of the late twentieth century, a modern man-made epidemic," the Queen said during the first Middle East Conference on Land-

mine Injury and Rehabilitation which was hosted in Jordan in July. During the conference, Queen Noor announced that Jordan would become a signatory of the Ottawa Treaty that bans the use, manufacture, stockpiling and sale of anti-personnel mines and demands their destruction.

Jordan signed the convention in November, and UNMAS commended Jordan's ratification of the convention.

Under the provisions of the Mine Ban Treaty, Jordan has 180 days to compile a report for the United Nations secretary general that includes information on its national implementation of demining measures, the total number of all stockpiled AP mines and their location.

The first meeting of States Parties is to take place in May in Mozambique.

Since January, 60 countries, out of 185 member states have ratified the treaty.

"This is the fastest entry into force of any treaty in history and it reflects how governments and civil society have come together to support this," Fowler said.

The demining programme in the Jordan Valley has cleared 146 minefields, freeing up 3,100 acres of land for cultivation, mining and tourism. Military officials say the landmines were planted during the Arab-Israeli wars and are found along Jordan's borders with Syria and Israel.

Most are located in big, fertile agricultural land; the threat they pose has rendered the land useless by the threat of these mines.

Bethany, the Baptism site of Christ, currently being prepared for the arrival of thousands of tourists at the turn of the century, has also been cleared of mines.

Walid Hayek had 1,200 dunums of fruit trees in the Jordan Valley. In 1975

he unknowingly stepped on a landmine that blew off his left foot.

"I had no idea that my land had been planted with landmines," he told the Jordan Times.

Hayek cannot cultivate his land, and today is waiting patiently for the military to step in to clear his land.

Since 1948, approximately 400 people in Jordan have fallen victim to landmines; 88 have died.

The Royal Corps of Engineers has set the year 2000 as the year the Jordan Valley will be landmine-free.

"I don't think the number of mines is relevant, but rather where the mines are located," said Fowler to the Jordan Times.

She added that even though minefields in Jordan are quite clearly defined and the location of landmines is well-known, mines are situated in areas where the population tends to go.

Ibrahim Waradat was ten

years old when he fell victim to a deadly mine while playing in his home town of Ramtha, near the Jordanian-Syrian border. Child's curiosity drove him to pick up a round metal "box."

"I tried hard to open it, but when it wouldn't I hit it with a rock. It exploded," said the 12-year-old boy. Ibrahim lost his left hand, four of his right fingers, his left eye and part of his vision in his right eye.

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## Indian PM fasts, calls for tolerance

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee underlined his calls for religious tolerance with a Gandhian tactic — a protest fast — Saturday, the 51st anniversary of the death of Mohandas "Mahatma" Gandhi.

Vajpayee's televised address to the nation Saturday focused on attacks on Christians in India, including an Australian missionary and his two sons who were burned to death. The attacks have been blamed on fundamentalist groups linked to Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party.

"Such violence violates the country's tradition and culture of tolerance," Vajpayee said. "Let no one be under any illusion: the laws of our land are clear, and they will be enforced — without exception and to the fullest degree — to punish those who violate this sacred guarantee." Vajpayee said the anniversary of Gandhi's death a national holiday in India was this year being observed "against an unhappy backdrop of sectarian violence. The nation cannot but be sad. We cannot but grieve."

His fast, he said, was undertaken in the spirit of "atonement and introspection." But Vajpayee's gesture was met with some scepticism, with The Times of India calling it "fast as farce" in an editorial Saturday.

"A genuinely stricken prime minister would simply resign from office, owning responsibility for all that has happened in recent months to tarnish the country's image," the Times said.

Vajpayee has been lambasted by both allies and opponents over his handling of the religious attacks, but his 10-month-old government

does not appear in immediate danger of falling.

Saturday, BJP member Madan Lal Khurana resigned as the cabinet minister for parliamentary affairs and tourism after being rebuffed by party hard-liners for his public criticism of the government.

Opposition Congress party president Sonia Gandhi said in a speech Saturday that Indian values have been threatened since parties "inimical to secularism" came to power.

"There has not only been negligence in enforcing the law, there has been collusion and sympathy with the dark forces," Press Trust of India quoted the Congress leader as saying. Sonia Gandhi is not related to Mohandas Gandhi.

A group of writers, artists and opposition politicians who organised a peace march in the capital Saturday accused Vajpayee, considered a moderate within the BJP, of doing little to rein in more radical elements.

"It is this climate of hate and intolerance ... that led to the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi," the march organisers said in a statement.

Some 10,000 people joined the peaceful march in downtown New Delhi, singing "We Shall Overcome" and waving banners with slogans against hatred.

Gandhi, known as the "mahatma" — or "great soul" — was shot and killed Jan. 30, 1948, by a Hindu nationalist enraged by Gandhi's attempts to repair Hindu-Muslim relations following the division of the former British colony into the independent nations of India and Pakistan in 1947.

Muslim leaders had demanded the creation of

Pakistan, saying they would be discriminated against in overwhelmingly Hindu India. But many Muslims stayed in India at partition and now form the largest of the country's religious minorities.

Gandhi, a Hindu, often fasted to protest the religious riots that erupted in the tense days before partition.

"I do not expect the India of my dream to develop one religion, i.e., to be wholly Hindu or wholly Christian or wholly Muslim," Gandhi once wrote. "I want it to be wholly tolerant, with its religions working side by side with one another."

Muslims and Christians marched together in New Delhi Friday, saying both groups were threatened by the rise of Hindu nationalists.

Christian groups have counted some 100 attacks ranging from the rape of nuns to the burning of Bibles in the last year, saying militant Hindus were emboldened when a BJP-led coalition government took power in March. The first fatal attacks came last week, when an Australian missionary and his two young sons were burned to death by a mob shouting Hindu nationalist slogans in a remote southeastern village.

Hindu fundamentalist leaders have denied involvement in the violence, but insist it be seen in the context of what they call the "cultural violence" of Christian conversions.

The fundamentalists say Hinduism's influence on Indian life could be diluted by conversions, though Christians have never been more than about 2 per cent of the country's population, which is nearing 1 billion. Muslims are about 12 per cent.



Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee places rose petals at a memorial of independence leader Mahatma Gandhi, on his 51st anniversary of assassination in New Delhi. Vajpayee observes a day-long fast to drive home the message of religious harmony and peace and appealed for tolerance in the backdrop of fierce attacks on minority Christians (Reuters photo)

## Macedonia seeks to ease dispute over ties with Taiwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Macedonia's premier appealed to China for understanding, saying the Balkan nation set up diplomatic ties with Taiwan to help resolve its economic woes, a newspaper reported Saturday.

The United Evening News quoted Ljupco Georgievski as saying in a telephone interview that he hopes China will understand the country must address its economic problems.

But he insisted the move to set up ties with Taiwan was constitutional. He said he hoped it would not force Macedonia to sever its ties with China.

Macedonia's President Kiro Gligorov, who was not consulted about the decision to set up official ties with Taiwan, Friday criticised his government's move as an "irresponsible and shameful" act that would jeopardise the country's international position and its relationship with China.

Gligorov's political allies, the former communists, lost control of parliament in November and as a result he has little influence on the country's policymaking.

Meanwhile, Taiwanese Foreign Minister Jason Hu said he hopes Macedonia's government can work out the dispute by itself.

He rebuffed accusations that Taiwan has used cash incentives to snag diplomatic relations with Macedonia. Taiwan does not engage in "dollar diplomacy," Hu said.

"Of course we take investment remuneration into consideration. ... we know that ties formed by money alone cannot last long," Hu told reporters.

"We hope they can come to an amicable resolution, let's allow them to solve the dispute. We don't want to make things complicated for them," Hu said.

Taiwanese officials deny having made any concrete commitments, but officials say Hu will assess possible aid projects when he visits Macedonia in late February at the head of a delegation of business leaders.

Taiwanese business leaders warn that unfamiliarity with Macedonia and the Balkan region, geographic distance and a slower economy at home make large-scale investments in Macedonia unlikely.

Macedonian Foreign Minister Aleksandar

Dimitrov has said Taiwan would invest "several hundred million dollars" in Macedonia's economy.

Establishing ties with Macedonia was a diplomatic coup for Taiwan, which has only one other ally in Europe, the Vatican.

China claims Taiwan as a breakaway province with no right to international representation.

Just 28 countries recognise Taiwan, most of them small, poor nations in Latin America and Africa.

China cuts ties with countries that recognise Taiwan, and there was speculation in the Taiwanese press Saturday that Beijing would use its permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council to pressure Macedonia into disavowing relations with Taiwan.

China could block support for the deployment on Macedonian soil of a 1,800-strong NATO rapid reaction force, designed to provide assistance to 2,000 international verifiers monitoring the situation in neighbouring Kosovo.

Macedonia seceded from Yugoslavia in 1991 — the only former Yugoslav republic to do so without bloodshed.

Days after the Time interview was published, a Mexican television station received what was said to be a handwritten letter from Aguilar claiming that Carlos

Salinas, his former chief of staff, two former governors and a prominent businessman also were linked to the plot. Aguilar also later denied having written the letter.

It was unclear whether the new revelations would affect the appeal of Salinas, who has maintained his innocence.

Prosecutors say that convicted gunman Daniel Aguilar has in the meantime denied to police that he made the allegations. And though there has been no new evidence cited, the claims have nonetheless been from page news this week in Mexico.

The case of the former president's brother, Raul Salinas de Gortari, has had so many bizarre twists — including the planting of a body by a clairvoyant hired by prosecutors and accusations that the victim's brother covered up the killing — that any new allegations are considered as plausible as anything else.

In an interview with Time magazine published this week, Aguilar claimed Raul Salinas, brother of former President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, had Jose Francisco Ruiz Massieu killed because he knew too much about Raul Salinas' criminal activities.

The attorney general's office said Friday that Aguilar later denied giving that interview, and had asked prosecutors on a previous occasion for a million pesos (\$100,000) in return for the allegedly incriminating evidence. The offer was rejected.

Days after the Time interview was published, a Mexican television station received what was said to be a handwritten letter from Aguilar claiming that Carlos

Raul Salinas' Swiss accounts in October, saying the money "inevitably suggest money laundering" of drug profits.

An appeals court upheld the acquittal of Raul Salinas on one of two illegal enrichment charges against him Friday. Salinas remains on trial on the first charge, which alleges he had millions in unreported income while serving as a mid-level official in his brother's administration.

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## Clinton calls for end to gender wage gap

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton called Saturday for a new \$14 million initiative to close the gap between men's and women's wages, and new legislation to enforce equal pay rights.

"When a woman is denied equal pay, it doesn't just hurt her," Clinton said in his weekly radio address. "It hurts her family, and that hurts America."

Last summer, the president's Council of Economic Advisers reported that women earn about 75 cents for every dollar a man earns — an improvement from the 58 cents on the dollar that women earned when President Kennedy signed the 1964 Equal Pay Act.

"We can be proud of this progress, but 75 cents on the dollar is still only three-quarters of the way there, and Americans can't be satisfied until we're all the way there," Clinton said.

His \$14 million proposal, part of the massive fiscal 2000 budget he will submit to Congress Monday, would:

— Triple the number of enforcement workers in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

— Provide technical assistance to employers on how to comply with equal pay laws.

## Kosovo conference to see intensive talks; outcome uncertain

LONDON (AP) — The Kosovo peace conference due to open on Feb. 6 in Rambouillet, near Paris, will combine direct talks and mediation by a trio of diplomats, with the foreign ministers of six countries on hand to intervene in case the talks hit deadlock.

The talks between the Yugoslav authorities and leaders of the ethnic Albanian majority in the province, will be led on a day to day basis by U.S. envoy Christopher Hill, the European Union's Kosovo envoy Wolfgang Petritsch and Russian official Igor Magorsky.

"Rambouillet will be a combination of meeting together and proximity talks," senior U.S. officials and diplomats said.

The 14th century Rambouillet castle, an official residence of French presidents, was the venue for the first summit of the Group of Seven major industrial powers in November 1975.

According to one U.S. diplomat, the French and British foreign ministers, respectively Hubert Vedrine and Robin Cook, would be "honorary chairmen" of the conference. They would be called upon, along with their peers from the other Contact Group countries to lay on the pressure if the talks became bogged down.

"This is happening in Europe.... We try to balance our determination to be the driving force with burden sharing," he said, adding: "The United States has been the driving force behind the timeframe, the military pressure, while others felt the need to negotiate."

The diplomat said that while they have said all along that they oppose outside military intervention in Kosovo, the Russians were not likely to undermine the negotiating process.

"We never doubted that the Russians want a solution... We believe they understand the importance of using threats, even if they don't agree to the use of force," he said.

Rugova has already said he will attend the conference. The big question is whether the Kosovo Liberation Army, which is fighting for independence from Belgrade, will also send representatives.

"There is not one KLA, there are a lot of them... We are not going to let the absence of one or another faction spoil it," a U.S. diplomat said.

U.S. and British officials believe it is possible to go ahead without the KLA even though a peace accord which did not include the rebel army, would have little chance of holding for

the pre-identical Spanish painter Diego de Silveira Velazquez, shown here, sold for over \$8.9 million at auction at Christie's in New York Friday, setting a record for the artist and for Spanish Old Masters. The painting, which dates to 1632-1634, was bought by a London buyer bidding by telephone (Reuters photo)



'Santa Rufina' by the Spanish master Diego de Silveira Velazquez, shown here, sold for over \$8.9 million at auction at Christie's in New York Friday, setting a record for the artist and for Spanish Old Masters. The painting, which dates to 1632-1634, was bought by a London buyer bidding by telephone (Reuters photo)

## Rights group reports five more dissident arrests in China

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese authorities have detained at least five democracy campaigners in recent days as they intensify efforts to crush dissent, a rights group reported Saturday.

The detentions mainly involved members of the China Democracy Party, the focus of a two-month-old campaign by the ruling Communist Party to ensure

order ahead of the 10th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square democracy movement.

A Shanghai-based Democracy Party member, Dai Xuezhong, was taken from his home Saturday morning hours before he had planned to host a "simple" lunch for about 20 dissident colleagues, the Information Centre of Human Rights and Democratic Movement in

China said.

It said police were "very nervous" and had warned the others not to go to Dai's home for lunch. Another of the group, Li Guotao, was detained Friday evening and released Saturday afternoon, it said.

The Hong-based group said Fu Shengping, elder brother of exiled dissident Fu Shengli, was detained by police

## Military expert issues warning over Kosovo air strike threat

LONDON (AFP) — A military expert warned here Saturday that the use of air strikes to punish the warring sides in Kosovo would not be effective without the deployment of ground troops.

The warning comes after the six-nation Contact Group Friday gave Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic and Kosovo's ethnic Albanian leaders up to 21 days to restore peace in the province, or face NATO intervention.

Colonel Mike Dewar of the International Institute of Strategic Studies told the BBC: "The international community is in a very complicated situation if they are going to use some sort of punishment if people refuse to talk."

He said: "Punishing Mr. Milosevic is relatively straightforward, but how do you make your point against the

Kosovars? Do you put troops on the ground to try and prevent arms getting through across the Albanian border?"

"It is doubtful whether the allies are prepared to do that at this stage, you would need a very large number of troops."

Dewar said: "Air power against people creeping across mountains using donkeys to take arms over the border would be totally ineffective. So the sanctions which are threatened may not be effective."

The Contact Group — Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and the United States — Friday set a deadline of Feb. 6 for Belgrade and separatist ethnic Albanians to start peace talks at Rambouillet, near Paris.

The group also imposed a deadline of a maximum 21 days for

the two sides to reach a peace settlement.

The U.N. Security Council formally backed the ultimatum.

In the face of Russian opposition to the use of force, neither the Contact Group nor the Security Council mentioned the threat of air strikes.

However, U.S. President Bill Clinton made it clear the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was prepared to use force if the two sides did not reach a deal.

Violence has escalated in the Yugoslav province of Kosovo in recent weeks in the wake of fresh massacres, including attacks on civilians.

Milosevic sent troops and heavily-armed special police units into Kosovo in February to try to crush an independence drive by the province's ethnic Albanian majority.

## China's parliament will debate constitutional amendments

BEIJING (AP) — China's parliament, the National People's Congress (NPC) will hold its second full annual session in Beijing on March 5, to examine amendments to the constitution and a government work report, official media reported Saturday.

The decision was passed on the second day of a meeting of the NPC Standing Committee. Nearly 3,000 deputies are expected to attend, Xinhua news agency reported.

The NPC will debate an amendment to the country's constitution related to the recognition of private property rights, according to a Chinese official source.

"Private property rights will be one of the most important constitutional amendments," a Chinese official told AFP.

"But it still needs to be discussed by National People's Congress (NPC) delegates," he said.

Xinhua said another amendment would put the theory of late patriarch Deng Xiaoping into the constitution to enshrine his pro-market philosophy in law, referred to as "a socialist market economy".

The phrase "is currently" in the sentence "China is currently in the primary stage of socialism" would be changed to "... will be over a long period of time ...," it said. The NPC's

sister assembly, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) has announced it will convene on March 3.

Also on the agenda were examining the implementation of the 1998 plan for economic and social development, and ratifying the 1999 version, Xinhua said.

Deputies would also look at national and local budgets for 1998 and approve the national budget for 1999. A draft contract law would also be on the table, the agency said.

According to the constitution, revisions must be proposed in the full session of the NPC by more than one-fifth of parliamentary deputies or the NPC Standing Committee and must be adopted by more than two-thirds of legislators.

Since the founding of Communist China in 1949, the NPC has promulgated four constitutions in 1954, 1975, 1978 and 1982. The existing 1982 Constitution, which has been amended twice in 1988 and 1993, stipulated that "the People's Republic of China is a socialist state under the people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class and based on the alliance of workers and peasants."

## Four die in house fire in France

MORLAIX, France (AP) — Four people died and three were injured, two of them seriously, in a fire Saturday in an apartment block in this northwestern French town, firemen said. Firemen continued to search the dilapidated building which was occupied by squatters and is due for demolition.

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### What next?

A LEADING Israeli daily newspaper disclosed recently what we been suspecting all along: Israel is developing a live small pox virus as part of its new generation in its biological weapons programme. An earlier report spoke of another Israeli biological weapon in the making which targets certain ethnic groups of people. God knows what other biological and chemical weapons Israel is developing clandestinely over and above its well-known nuclear capability.

Of course neither Washington nor London, Paris or even Moscow are sounding the alarm about these Israeli efforts to expand the horizons of its weapons of mass destruction. This ominous silence is taking place against the backdrop of recent warnings by U.S. President Bill Clinton against the proliferation of biological weapons in particular and the determined efforts to rid Iraq of its mass destruction arsenals.

It is hard to explain this hypocrisy and practice of double standards in the conduct of international affairs. The Arabs will continue to be baited with the question of why whatever Israel does or develops or possesses is all right as rain as far as the U.S. and its allies are concerned, but not a single Arab country is allowed to develop an even modest means of deterrence to a genuine Israeli threat. His Majesty King Hussein spoke of the mushrooming dangers of biological weapons a few days ago after his return from the U.S. and warned about the laxity of the international community in putting in place an effective machinery to prevent and reverse the tide of the amassing of biological and chemical weapons.

We in Jordan have a stake in what Israel develops and acquires in terms of weapons of mass destruction. The Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty does not give Israel licence to possess any form of mass destruction weapons much less a new breed of biological bombs that target Arabs in particular. We view this tendency on the part of Israel to develop an ethnic-oriented bomb as a racist move fraught with unlimited dangers on all fronts. Jordan is duty-bound to make strong representations to Israel about its military programmes since they pose a real threat to us. Israel must not and cannot take us for granted simply because we have a peace treaty. A peace treaty cuts both ways, and Israel has yet to respect its end of the bargain where it counts most.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Dustour's editorial said Amman's hosting of the 16th Arab Interior Minister's Meeting, coincides with concerns about His Majesty King Hussein's health and his designation of HRH Abdullah as Crown Prince, and Regent. Prince Abdullah stressed the King's efforts to achieve peace and security in order to get a better future when he opened the meeting, and emphasised King Hussein's efforts to preserve the reputation of Islam and Muslims. The Prince gave a great deal of concern to terrorism and narcotics trafficking, praising the Arab ministers' efforts to establish a comprehensive strategy to combat the two problems, which threaten the Arab Nation's security, stability and future. The ministers' speeches reflect Jordan's respected position regionally and internationally, thanks to the Hashemite leadership.

Al Dustour's Yaser Za'atreh said people who support the idea that Arab and international stands are surrendering to U.S. policy serve to further encourage the U.S. position regarding the Iraqi crisis. Such supporters are, in fact, promoting despair not only for Iraq, but the entire Arab Nation, and this is the most dangerous thing that could occur. Za'atreh added, if Arab and international opinion were in harmony with the U.S., what would be the need for U.S. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright to tour Moscow, Cairo, Riyadh, Amman and Paris, the writer asked. The journey aims to remove the effects of the recent aggression on Iraq and ease reactions to it, said Za'atreh, who added that internationally, Washington feels the pressure of the Russian, French and Chinese stands, which have issued strong disagreements with the U.S. Although the Arab situation is generally weak, it does not surrender to nor is it in harmony with that of the U.S., according to the writer. Za'atreh added it is not logical to claim that Washington was satisfied with the results of Arab Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

## Why Jordan supports a Palestinian state

THE AVAILABLE set of information, and the prevailing circumstances point to the fact that a Palestinian state is, without doubt, in the offing. The declaration of Palestinian independence may take place on May 4, as originally envisaged, but it may be delayed for some time due to American-Egyptian pressures, or in return for American and European guarantees and assurances. However, the project itself is not reversible and, barring unforeseen surprises, will see the light before the turn of the century.

When a Palestinian state is finally declared in the West Bank and Gaza, by virtue of the United Nations 1947 partition resolution which called for two states, it will be a small and poor country, but it will find around 40 other countries which are smaller in land mass and population. It will also be ranked second, after Israel, in terms of how much foreign aid rel-

ative to the size of its population it will receive.

The Palestinian state will enjoy a political clout and play a role much larger than its size, for two reasons: the history of the Palestinian cause and struggle which has earned the respect of the world on one hand, and the fact that there are sizeable Palestinian demographic extensions in several key countries such as Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the Gulf states, and the United States.

Israeli leaders who object to the Palestinian state would like the world to believe that Jordan is suspicious and rejects the project, because a Palestinian state may pose a risk to Jordan. Jordanian officials have repeatedly denied such claims. The official position of Jordan is in full support of the idea of establishing a Palestinian state, and is ready to formally recognise it immediately. As a matter of fact, Palestine already a

full-fledged embassy in Amman flying the Palestinian flag and accorded full diplomatic status.

However, the government of Jordan prefers to see that the emergence of the Palestinian state comes about through negotiations rather than after a unilateral declaration, which may lead to a conflict. The negotiation option looks feasible, because a Palestinian state is acceptable to the majority of the Israelis as public opinion polls have shown. There is no reason to opt for a course of action that may lead to an uneven conflict with the Israelis as long as the diplomatic option is open.

Admittedly the emergence of an independent Palestinian state will have serious consequences for Jordan, but most of them are positive. The mere existence of an independent Palestinian state, together with the right of return to that state will solve a sensitive problem in Jordan, namely effec-

tive dual nationality, of the Palestinians of Jordan, who will have the right, for the first time to make a crucial choice. They, as individuals, will have to choose between full and final Jordanian citizenship, to be Palestinians residing in Jordan or be willing to return to Palestine. Observers

believe that the majority will take the first option.

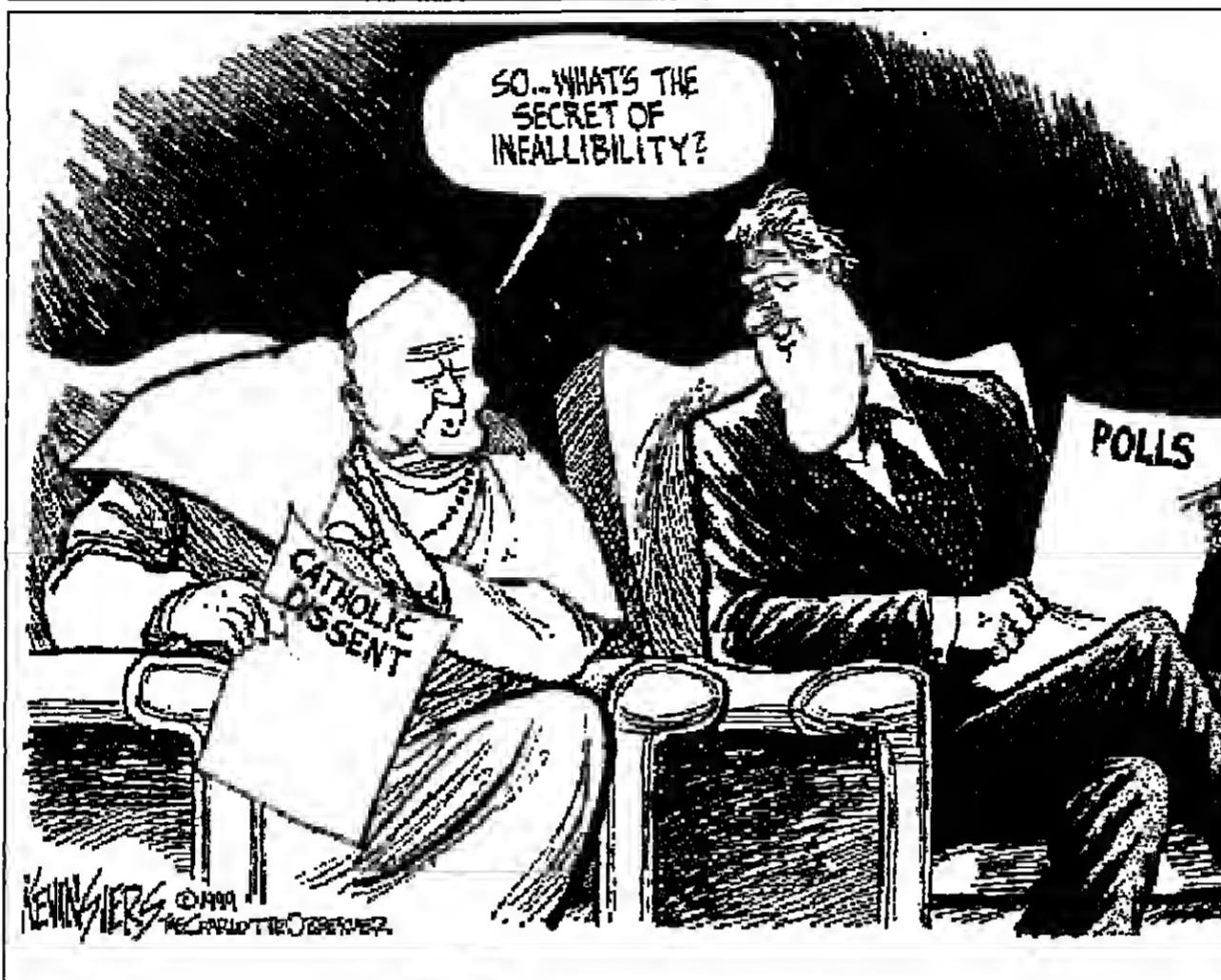
On the other hand, the establishment of a Palestinian state will put an end to the idea of making Jordan a substitute homeland for the Palestinians. It will be abundantly clear thereafter, that Jordan is Jordan and Palestine is Palestine, and cards can not be mixed up as some Israeli leaders have been trying in vain to do for the past three decades.

Jordan will obviously be the natural gateway to the Arab World for the Palestinian people, providing valuable strategic depth for the nascent state, otherwise surrounded by Israel. Therefore any Palestinian regime will be friendly to Jordan and interested in maintaining the best relations with Jordan under all circumstances. The two states will develop excellent political relations along with the strongest of economic and cultural ties.

### Sunday's Economic Pulse



Dr. Fahed Faneck



## The Republicans have already lost a culture war of their own making

By Andrew Marshall

IT LOOKS as if, after 12 long months, the greatest show on earth — though maybe not the trial of the century — is drawing to a close. As Dale Bumpers, the former Arkansas Senator, spoke on Thursday, there was a strange feeling in Washington, as though a wind were blowing through the city, or a monsoon were breaking. The sense of an impending end was palpable: the new age of After Monica. Maybe not today, or this week, but soon, the impeachment trial of Bill Clinton will come to an end, either with dismissal or his acquittal.

It has been a bizarre year: one of fascination and compulsion at times; of deep tedium and perplexity at others. But the lasting question, and the least satisfying element of the whole thing, is: what is it all about? What is it all for?

For the President's supporters, it is a right-wing conspiracy, a partisan attempt to bring down a great man and reverse the electorate's choice. For his opponents, it is about the rule of law, the Constitution and the crimes of a man who should have resigned months ago if he had any honour. These competing claims just do not meet in the middle in any way. They are what social scientists call incommensurable: they reflect two different world views and sets of moral, political and legal assumptions that just don't match up.

One way of looking at the significance of the whole affair is just this: that what has happened is a visible manifestation of the great kultkampf between two American value systems, the famous "Culture Wars". This argument holds that since the Sixties, the left-leaning, liberal, secular, modernising tide in America has competed against the traditional, religious, conservative view. Clinton clearly represents the former for most people, while the other side has been led by people like Kenneth Starr, Henry Hyde and Trent Lott, unbending advocates of law and morality in public, at

least).

The right will argue that After Monica, chaos is come again, and the dominance of White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ways is over. This is over-egging it. Free love is unlikely to break out in the streets of middle America. Cannabis will not be smoked in public buildings (nothing, in fact, will be smoked in public buildings, bars or restaurants below a certain size, for the foreseeable future). The two main candidates for high office in 2000 will most likely be two impeccable Wasps: George Walker Bush and Albert Gore.

It takes a bit of stretching to see the events of the last year as constituting a Rubicon. The nation as a whole has been far from riveted. But to some extent, that is the point. For at least two decades, the right — disproportionately Southern and Western, white and Baptist — has been politically dominant, whatever was going on in the streets of America. Conservatives began their ascent in the Sixties, as the white majority rejected what it saw as the Democrats' shift to the left. They had money, ideology and political dominance on their side. Although the nation changed, Washington, to a remarkable degree, did not.

The hold that the conservative right had on political debate has been broken, in the last year, by its inept handling of the debates in Congress, by the internal wars within the Republican Party, and by its appalling grasp of public opinion. In many ways, the conflict has looked rather like the depiction of the English Civil War in 1666 and All That: the Clintonites, like the Cavaliers, are Wrong but Romantic, whereas the Republicans are Right but Repulsive.

I do not think that the impeachment of Bill Clinton is the culminating battle of a great social shift in the U.S. and the end of the fight over values; I think it is the beginning of another political change: the rewriting of the Republican Party, which has come badly unhinged. The party represents a shard of white,

*'Free love is unlikely to break out in the streets of middle America. Cannabis will not be smoked in public buildings'*

Southern, conservative opinion that is a minority in America, and has been for decades. If the Republicans identify that, and that alone, with righteousness, values and morality, it will make a historic mistake. If there has been a culture war for the last year, it has been mainly because the Republicans have forced one — and they have lost. They cannot blame the moral malaise of the Sixties for that — they can only blame themselves.

Most Americans find themselves somewhere in between the two great world views, and are not ready to be dragged into a war. To the astonishment of the pollsters and politicians, they express views of some complexity instead of stark ideological polarisation, as they might have done 20 years ago. And so they have turned off, which is what, in few weeks, we shall all be able to do — with some relief, but a little nostalgia.

— The Guardian

### LETTERS

#### Best wishes

To the Editor:

WE, FILIPINO residents/guest workers in the benevolent Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, wish to add our voices in congratulating His Majesty King Hussein, HRH Crown Prince Abdullah, and Prince Hassan, for the very smooth and peaceful handover of responsibilities, which is testimony to the political stability of the country.

We also wish to add our fervent prayers for their personal well-being, most specially His Majesty, for the success of their respective endeavours, and the peace and order and prosperity of Jordan and the Jordanian people to which we have everlasting attachment and love.

The Filipino Community in Jordan

#### For a better world

To His Majesty:

I AM sending this because, like His Majesty King Hussein, I too was once in a hospital. Over fifteen years ago I was diagnosed with cancerous brain tumour, a life-threatening illness. I was faced with death and was left to contemplate the nature of things. Only by the grace of God am I here to write this. In the time that has passed, I have learned to be more aware of how we, as individuals, impact the history of mankind.

I believe His Majesty King Hussein has done much to help the world. I believe he stands for peace. I believe he understands that even though the world is made up of different people, different faiths and different cultures, we can all live together in peace. I believe he has done all that is within his power to promote this belief. That is why I take the time to write this, to thank him, and to ask that you, the people of Jordan, continue to support his efforts toward peace.

We may call our God by different names. We may worship our God in different ways. Nevertheless, we believe in God. No matter the politics of our day, our God remains. This is the basis for mutual understanding. An understanding that may very well hold the key to true peace.

The people of Jordan and the people of the United States are not all that different. We are born, we grow, we love, we marry, we have children, we work and we die. And all through the process, we try to carry on our lives and work to insure that the life of our children and family will better than the life we have led. I believe we can best serve this purpose by working together toward world peace.

One day, god willing, I will have the opportunity to visit your country. I can only hope that your King is there to share with me his hope for peace.

God bless His Majesty King Hussein and the people of Jordan.

Paul Swett  
Bentonville, Arkansas  
U.S.

#### Pursue a positive image

To the Editor:

I must agree with the majority of Arab women, that the TWO shows that were aired in the U.S. in regard to "Honour Killings" was not only inappropriate at the time of airing, but the content in itself was most damaging to the country of Jordan. People here in the U.S. have been successfully brainwashed to a certain extent, and have allowed the media to poison their minds. I am speaking not as an Arab but as an American. I have travelled to the Middle East, and have not only seen, but felt, at first hand, the racist wrath of Israel. It is ironic that the U.S. as a nation will not allow prayer in their schools' but supports a nation who actually believes God is their landlord.

The two airings of "Honour Killings" only added salt to the wounds and allowed for the further poisoning of the American mind. It is only logical that the masses who are absorbing the media, will in time develop negative attitudes towards a particular group. If the Arabs continue to allow such negative propaganda on such a large platform, they will lose! The Arabs have to take lessons from their cousins — speak out, defend, uphold and pursue a more positive image through whatever platform available (with the exception of violence) in order to fight back and gain respect. Leave culture and religion out of the issue and pursue a more humanitarian approach, it's the 90s!

Robin Muffi  
Chicago  
U.S.

#### Children hold the key

To the Editor:

I am a retired teacher and could not agree more with Mohammad Abu Jaber (LETTERS Jan 28-29). If children are our salvation we must teach them, if we are to live peacefully and in harmony, that we are all brothers and sisters.

Victor C. Bush  
Montreal



Rubin: Sound policies key to ending financial turmoil

## U.S. urges Europe and Japan to help world economy

DAVOS, Switzerland (R) — The United States Saturday challenged Europe and Japan to finally live up to their responsibilities in the troubled world economy and help end a stubborn global financial crisis that refuses to go away.

Taking the stage at an exclusive meeting of political, finance and business leaders in the Swiss Alps, U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin said the key to ending the world's worst financial turmoil in half a century was to pursue sound policies and break down barriers to the free flow of goods and capital.

But he warned that the United States could not go it alone.

"For a healthy global economy it's very important for the other industrial countries in the world — Europe and Japan — to focus aggressively on promoting domestic growth and substantially reduce formal and informal barriers to trade," he said at the World Economic Forum.

Rubin's plea came a day after U.S. Vice President Al Gore delivered a similarly strong message to Tokyo: "Please, we need your help to deal with this global economic crisis."

Washington's calls on Japan to pull itself up by the bootstraps have become more urgent over recent months as the situation in the world's number two economy has shown no sign of improvement. Without growth in Japan, U.S. officials say, the rest of Asia has no chance of emerging from its own deep slump.

As to Europe, Washington has warned the continent not to forget the urgent need for structural reforms that would boost labour mobility and cut red tape as its leaders concentrate on making the new single currency, the euro, work.

But Japan's seemingly endless economic slide has stirred even greater worries — and desperation — in Washington.

U.S. officials have repeatedly warned Tokyo to deal with its precarious fiscal situation and ailing banking sector right away or risk being relegated to the rank of a second-rate economy.

In a sign of growing desperation over Tokyo's slow response, Rubin Friday signalled Washington may no longer be opposed to using monetary policy to shore up the Japanese economy. He stopped short of endorsing suggestions that Tokyo should print

more money to kick-start languishing domestic demand but said Japan needed to look at "all available policy tools" while carefully considering the effects of using monetary policy.

Rubin reiterated his strong opposition to manipulating currencies or reining in the free flow of capital to that end.

Rejecting European calls to establish target zones for the world's major currencies, Rubin said the key to more stability in the world's free-wheeling foreign exchange markets was sound underlying policies and the will to stick with them.

A sensible exchange rate regime "means floating rates supported by sound policies," he said, adding that aiming at specific currency levels or even ranges risked deflecting from the overarching need to pursue sound domestic policies.

"As we look back over the experience of this crisis, we can see that the absolute key to financial stability and economic growth is consistent adherence to strong macroeconomic and structural policy," he said in the text of prepared remarks.

Rubin said such policies were not only key to calming volatile currency

markets but also to maintaining the confidence of skittish international investors. Trying to rein in the free flow of capital was the wrong way to go about it, he said.

"Over time they retard growth, deter investment from abroad, become bolder and harder to administer, and are often used as a substitute for reform," he added.

Rubin, his spirits boosted by evidence that the U.S. economy remains by far the most powerful growth engine in the world even in its eighth year of uninterrupted expansion, insisted that all signs pointed to continued solid growth in the

year ahead.

He played down worries over the nation's ballooning trade deficit, boosted to record levels as exports to crisis- ridden nations have plummeted and imports surged, and insisted the key response should be more openness to trade elsewhere.

Washington, for its part, was committed to open markets.

"It is almost impossible...to avoid the conclusion that the United States has simply been more open to absorbing the exports of countries seeking to recover from crisis," Rubin said.

## Asian leaders see no return to pre-crisis growth

DAVOS, Switzerland (AFP) — Asian economies will recover from their financial crisis over the next few years, but should not aspire to return to pre-crisis growth levels which were unsustainable, Asian leaders said Saturday.

Singapore Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew said the post-crisis economic climate was fundamentally different from that which fostered the Asian miracle of the 1980s and 1990s.

"If they restore confidence and the economy begins to tick again, it will take two, three, four, maybe five years in some countries," he told the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting in the Swiss ski resort of Davos.

But he added: "I do not see growth recovering at six, eight, or 10 per cent, because those .. halcyon

days are over. We are going to face a different world, more competitive, more severe."

The Asian crisis, as well as the economic storms afflicting Russia and Brazil, are a dominant theme of this year's meeting, which has as its theme "Responsible Globalization."

The WEF meeting gathers together some 1,000 global business chiefs with more than 250 politicians and heads of state and government.

Hong Kong chief executive Tung Chee Hwa agreed with Lee, and said Asian leaders must look to economic fundamentals.

"There is no particular magic policy, we need to constantly go back to the basics, how to rebuild the confidence," he stressed. "Countries in Asia will come to grips with their problems

at different speeds."

Referring to U.S. economic woes in the late 1980s and European problems, he said: "I have no doubt all of us in Asia will go through the painful process. It may take some time, but we will come out of it too."

The importance of Japan's role in supporting global recovery has been a theme of talks at the Davos meeting. U.S. Vice-President Al Gore said Friday: "The stakes are very high," and appealed to Japan: "Please, we need your help to deal with this global economic crisis."

Lee said that crisis-hit East Asian economies can recover without a turnaround in Japan, but only to a limited extent. "Can we bounce back without a Japanese recovery, yes we can bounce back but not to

the growth levels seen before the Asian crisis," he said Friday.

The Singapore leader said an educated workforce would be the crucial asset for Asian countries seeking to recover and develop into knowledge-based economies. This was in stark contrast to Asia's previous boom years.

"The last time it was simply taking them from agriculture and putting them in industry, assembly line production," he said.

"If the lights go out in Asia the impact on the global economy will be really unimaginable," he said.

## Iran expects to earn \$12b from oil exports

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran, the second largest oil producer in the Middle East, expects to earn \$12 billion from such exports this year, according to forecasts made by parliament.

The assembly anticipated total revenues of \$10.6 billion from crude exports and another \$1.47 billion from the sale of oil-related products.

The figures were set out in the government's proposed budget for next year, which aims to cut state spending following collapsing oil prices in the past year.

Iran has been hard hit by falling crude prices and expects

at least a \$5 billion deficit for the coming fiscal year.

The country is counting on crude sales receipts of \$11.8 a barrel, although Iranian crude is currently selling at around \$9 a barrel.

Iran depends on oil exports for over 80 per cent of its hard currency earnings and its economy is immensely vulnerable to price fluctuations.

The parliament this month approved a 75 per cent rise in domestic petrol prices, though the hike was considerably less than the 275 per cent increase the government demanded in a bid to cut public spending.

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SAUDI RIAL	5.2978	1.0000	1.0209	9.9478	9.7416	1.0300	12.3888
BAHRAIN DINAR	5.1883	1.0000	9.7443	9.5424	1.0069	12.1354	1.0778
QATARI DINAR	0.5323	0.1005	0.1028	1.0000	0.9793	1.2454	1.1105
YEMENI DINAR	0.5434	0.1027	0.1048	1.0212	1.0000	0.1057	1.2717
QATAR RIAL	5.1434	0.9796	0.9812	8.6581	8.4980	1.0000	12.0281
KUWAIT DINAR	0.4276	0.0807	0.0824	0.8030	0.7683	0.0831	1.0000
Egyptian Pound	4.8145	0.9988	0.9276	8.0407	8.8533	1.0361	11.2591
LEBANON LIRA	21.4937	4.0562	4.1359	40.3405	39.5044	4.1769	50.2395
US DOLLAR	1.4124	0.2668	0.2722	2.6522	2.5973	0.2748	3.3031
GBRITAIN STERLING	0.8577	0.1619	1.8105	1.5772	1.6588	0.2057	1.0762
GERMANY MARK	2.4116	0.4552	0.4547	4.5284	4.4344	0.4589	5.6398
SWITZERLAND FRAN	1.9866	0.3750	0.3828	3.7304	3.6531	0.3962	4.8457
FRANCE FRANC	8.0868	1.5267	1.5386	15.1875	14.8727	1.5743	18.8143
JAPAN YEN	1.5252	0.3076	0.3140	3.0599	2.9965	0.3168	3.8100
HOLLAND GULDEN	2.7172	0.5129	0.5235	5.1023	4.9968	0.5293	5.3544
SWEDEN KRONA	10.8919	2.0560	2.0699	20.4927	20.0288	2.1177	25.4715
ITALY LIRA	23.8747	4.5067	4.6008	44.8315	43.9023	4.6418	55.0224
BELGIUM FRANC	49.7400	9.3892	9.5882	93.4010	91.4651	8.8703	11.3301
AUSTRALIA DOLLAR	2.2545	0.4258	0.4344	4.2354	4.1457	0.4393	5.2722
GREEK DRACHMA	3.9880	0.7177	0.7643	7.4472	7.2928	0.7711	9.2748
CYPRUS POUND	2.6638	0.5068	0.5177	5.0393	4.9448	0.5218	5.2658
AUSTRIA SCHILLING	3.2027	0.3268	0.3289	31.8957	31.1994	0.3298	39.8776
CANADA DOLLAR	2.1469	0.4053	0.4137	4.0314	3.9478	0.4174	5.0208
EURO	1.2330	0.2328	0.2378	2.3154	2.2674	0.2397	2.6835

CURRENCY	US DOLLAR	CANADA DOLLAR	GERMANY MARK	SWITZERLAND FRANC	FRANCE FRANC	JAPAN YEN	HOLLAND GULDEN	ITALY LIRA	SWEDEN KRONA
US DOLLAR	1.0000	1.6428	0.5857	0.7110	0.1746	0.8668	0.5198	5.9160	11.4592
GBRITAIN STERLING	0.6872	1.0000	0.3557	0.4317	0.1060	0.5263	0.3158	3.5924	6.6956
GERMANY MARK	1.7674	2.5117	1.0000	1.2136	0.2982	1.4799	0.8975	10.1010	19.9558
SWITZERLAND FRAN	1.4265	2.3182	0.8239	1.0000	0.2456	1.2191	0.7311	8.3205	16.6111
FRANCE FRANC	5.7263	8.4301	3.2398	4.0713	1.0000	4.9634	2.9768	33.8768	8.5582
JAPAN YEN	153.5700	169.8913	67.5705	82.0283	20.1474	1.0000	59.9702	682.5307	132.1563
HOLLAND GULDEN	1.9236	3.1681	1.1267	1.3678	0.3380	1.6762	1.0000	11.3812	22

## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### Jordanian pharmaceutical companies seek 'contract manufacturing' agreements with multinational strategic partners

\*\* ACCORDING TO the Jordanian Association of Pharmaceutical and Medical Appliances Manufacturers, the volume of medicines subject to patent is estimated at \$12 million. The association's president, Maher Matalqa, said the national pharmaceutical industry has been able to compete with international companies by exercising quality control on the products before and after manufacturing.

Matalqa added that the Jordanian industry fully complies with international standards and specifications and is committed to the "good manufacturing principles." He indicated that many companies have acquired the ISO 9001 certificate and the approval of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration noting that Jordanian pharmaceutical products are available in the U.S. market.

He rejected pressure from a U.S. lobby group of pharmaceutical researchers and manufacturers to cut the transitional period for Jordanian drug industry in the negotiations to join the WTO (World Trade Organisation). "The transitional period is very important for the pharmaceutical industry to adjust and adapt in order to enter the international markets," Matalqa said noting that the U.S. is pressuring for full implementation of the agreement from day one after joining the WTO. According to a report from the U.S. lobby group, the U.S. companies lose \$9 billion annually for the lack of intellectual property rights and of market controls that regulate prices in other producing countries.

Matalqa stressed that the latest survey conducted by the association showed the volume of medicines subject to patent to be around \$12 million including exports. He highlighted the most important challenge facing the pharmaceutical industry to be in abiding by international agreements such as the Jordanian-European partnership and WTO accords. The agreements stipulate abiding by TRIPs or intellectual property rights and give a ten-year transitional period for adjustment starting from Jan. 1, 1995.

The association president urged finding new markets to export generic medicines to them. "We are seriously thinking of exporting to the European Union (EU) as some Jordanian companies have been able to register some of their products in EU states," he said. "Moreover we have started an integrated programme in cooperation with the Swedish government to rehabilitate the pharmaceutical industry in order to enter the international markets."

The rehabilitation covers training and conforming standards and specifications. Matalqa said noting that sales of medicines in the EU states is expected to amount to \$12 billion next year. He emphasised the importance of finding multinational strategic partners to give franchise licensing to Jordanian companies for exporting purposes noting that the search is underway for strategic manufacturing partners at Jordanian plants in what is described as "contract manufacturing" (Al Ra'i).

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 1999

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) You don't have any trouble talking your friends into doing whatever you have in mind. The trick is finding a way to finance it. It might feel like some of your dreams are being thwarted, but don't give up on them. Just put them on hold for a while. You'll think of something. You always do.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Looks like people are trying to tell you how to live your life today. A little of that goes a long way with you, but don't be rude. Just tell the helpful busybodies that your life is pretty much the way you want it, and you'll let them know if you need advice. Then, get back to your favourite Sunday activity: lounging in luxury.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) You may have a bit of a hangover, or a few aches and pains. Well, that's what happens when you push life to the limit. Don't complain. Most of your friends are probably in the same condition. You could commiserate with them, but what's the point? It'll do you more good to rest up. You'll need to be in top form again tomorrow.

**CANCER:** (June 22 to July 22) If you feel like having company over or visiting friends today, pick people you can be yourself around. This is a sweat pants kind of Sunday. You've had enough adventures for a while. What you need now is to relax into something familiar. Play a game you've played a thousand times before, with people whose moves you know by heart.

**LEO:** (July 23 to August 22) Some of the older people you'll be running into today are really stuck in their ways. You and your friend keep trying to rattle their cages, but they will not be budged. Actually, the people in question are often warm, loving and sympathetic, but only when treated kindly. Be aware today of the influence your behaviour has on the results you're achieving.

**VIRGO:** (August 23 to September 22) The far horizon has been beckoning for ages, but you've just been too busy. Today you could come up with the same excuse, but don't. Pick out the three most important chores, and do them. Then put your guilt to rest. You need to stretch your legs and your mind every once in a while, by doing something just for the sheer fun of it.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22)

Looks like there may be financial complications regarding travel plans today, but it really depends on what your true love has to say. If he or she wants to go, you could be talked into it. If not, then you're staying home. Libra is the sign of partnerships. Offer your own opinions, so your partner will know which way to help you decide.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Today is a good day to make serious decisions about love, romance, real estate, career, children, marriage... and whatever else you can think of. Consider every option carefully. If you're allowing your sweetheart to participate, you'll have even more interesting things to think about. That's highly recommended, by the way.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) You might get the urge to have a garage sale today. Once you get the garage cleaned out, could actually get the car in, and thus increase its longevity. And once the car is a classic antique, it'll be even more valuable. So you can see how having a garage sale could greatly increase your overall net worth.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 19) There's lots of stuff in fixed signs today, slowing things down, like molasses in January. Traffic will be like that. Conversations will be like that, too. Your head may feel that way. If so, it's only because you took yesterday's advice and got fully self-expressed. It's important to do that every once in a while.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 20 to February 18) If you decide not to think about anything more serious than which buttons to push on the remote today, you may be forgiven. Your mind has had quite a workout lately, and it needs time to regenerate, as does the rest of you, most likely. Declare today a day of rest.

**PISCES:** (February 19 to March 20) If you're a typical Pisces, you learn better by listening than by reading. If you're having trouble with a difficult subject, get a video on it. Pisces is the sign of film and one of the signs representing television, and other being Aquarius. Since the sun is in Aquarius, you have permission to watch TV today — hopefully the educational channels.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

### Microsoft overtakes GE to top FT500

LONDON (AFP) — Microsoft has overtaken General Electric (GE) as the world's most valuable company, according to the FT500, the Financial Times' annual ranking of companies around the globe.

The paper said the reversed ranking for the two U.S. conglomerates reflected the markets' continuing enthusiasm for technology stocks over the last 12 months.

The survey orders firms by their market capitalisation — the share price multiplied by the number of shares issued. Microsoft was worth \$271,854.4 million, said the FT, while GE was worth \$258,871.3 million.

Next came Exxon, Royal Dutch/Shell — the only non-American company in the top 10 — Merck, Pfizer, Intel, Coca-Cola, Wal-Mart Stores and International Business Machines.

Overall, 244 of the top 500 firms were American, said the paper, 173 were European, 46 were Japanese, 20 were from the Asia-Pacific region, 10 were Canadian, four were Latin American, two were Middle Eastern and one was British-Australian.

Changes from the previous year reflected surging U.S. and European equity markets over 1998, according to the FT, poorly performing emerging markets, economic crisis in Japan, a wave of mergers in the U.S. and Europe and increasing values for technology stocks.

### Total profits fall 9%

PARIS (AFP) — Total has reported that net profits, excluding non-recurrent items, had fallen by nine per cent to 6.9 billion francs (\$1.05 billion euros, \$1.2 billion) in 1998.

The result was in line with forecasts by most analysts.

Operating profits, excluding non-recurrent items, fell by 8.2 per cent to 12.5 billion francs (1.91 billion euros). Total said.

The fall of the price of oil reduced profits overall by 4.1 billion francs but growth of business and an increase of productivity boosted profits by 1.7 billion francs, company president Thierry Desmarest said.

Sales fell by 16.8 per cent to 159 billion francs (24.24 billion euros).

Net earnings per share fell by 9.4 per cent to 28.1 francs (4.28 euros), excluding non-recurrent items.

The average price of a barrel of North Sea Brent oil fell by 34 per cent last year to \$12.7 per barrel from \$19.1 in 1997, the company said.

But refining margins increased by eight per cent to \$16.9 per tonne from \$15.6 in 1997.

## Study: Worldwide 1998 personal computer sales up 15 per cent

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Global sales of personal computers (PCs) grew 15 per cent in 1998 due to strong demand in the United States and Europe, the market research group Dataquest said Friday.

"Affordability and growing relevance of Internet content is sustaining double-digit PC growth in the United States," said Dataquest's Bill Schaub.

Dataquest's latest survey suggests that as many as 37 per cent of U.S. households are now connected to the Internet, he said.

Compaq Computers held its lead in the worldwide personal computer industry, with nearly 14 per cent market share in 1998, Dataquest said.

IBM remained second in

full-year 1998 market share ranking, but Dell Computers finished a much closer third than in 1997, having seen 65 per cent growth in sales over the year.

The industry's healthy fourth quarter growth helped push it to a strong finish for the year, the report found.

According to preliminary estimates from another research group, International Data Corp. (IDC), total shipments of personal computers rose to 27.3 million units in the fourth quarter.

That represented a 23 per cent rise from the previous quarter's figure and a 15 per cent rise over 1997's fourth quarter.

Though Compaq retained

its leadership in both global and U.S. market share, it saw its U.S. market share in the fourth quarter fall to 18.1 per cent from 19.0 per cent in the year-earlier period, IDC said.

IBM's global market share for the quarter shrank to 8.2 per cent from 8.6 per cent in the year-earlier period, IDC reported.

Meanwhile, Dell saw its global market share rise to 7.9 per cent from 5.5 per cent in the quarter. Dell's U.S. market share rose to 12.8 per cent from 9.9 per cent in the year-earlier period.

The U.S. market for personal computers was characterised by ferocious price competition, according to the IDC study.

"Windows 98, Apple's

Mac, and low-cost Win95 (Windows-Intel based PCs) systems fuelled consumer demand in the second half of the year," IDC said. "The year finished with a bang as bargain-conscious consumers picked up PCs in record numbers during the holiday season."

Western European markets also helped sustain the industry's momentum, with faster rates of growth in sales than in any other region for the full year.

But rising sales in both the United States and Europe were somewhat offset by the pummelling impact of PC market growth of economic slumps in Japan, the Asia-Pacific region and Eastern Europe, IDC reported.

### Hikma Investment raises \$8.8 million in private placement

AMMAN (J.T.) — Hikma Investment, the largest pharmaceutical company in Jordan, and one of the few privately held multinational generic pharmaceutical companies in the world, offered 1,208,333 shares — representing approximately 7.1 per cent of its capital — to new and accredited investors in a private placement. The offering closed at a price of \$7.25 per share, The Export and Finance Bank, and Adas Investment Group co-managed the offering.

International institutional and venture capital funds took the lion's share of the offering with the remaining shares distributed across smaller investors.

Hikma Investment own production facilities in Portugal, the United States, Saudi Arabia in addition to Jordan and has a broad and diversified export market.

"Part of the company's success has been our flexibility of having several operations which can complement each other when necessary," said Sal Darwazah, chairman and chief executive of Hikma Investment.

"Hikma Investment has developed the flexibility of supply, economies of scale, and broad market access that are essential to modern transnational industry," he added.

The proceeds of the offering will be used mainly toward funding ongoing capital

expenditures, and the introduction of new products.

"Despite the recent turmoil in global equity markets and the corrections taking place worldwide, we were able to close the placement at a price of 21 times 1997 earnings (18 times 1998 fully diluted expected earnings)," Ali Al Husy, chairman and chief executive of the Export and Finance Bank, said.

"Based on experienced management, strong growth fundamentals and solid financials, Hikma Investment represented an attractive long-term investment opportunity," Al Husy added.

Hikma Investment was established in 1991 to consolidate the ownership of all the Hikma group's subsidiary companies throughout the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, and the United States. The company's subsidiaries all produce high quality pharmaceuticals in finished dosage form and bulk chemicals and have extensive global marketing and distribution capabilities. All the major subsidiaries in operation have been inspected and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) — the only pharmaceutical manufacturer in the Arab Middle East to have FDA approval.

To date, the holdings of Hikma Investment total \$108 million in assets with 1998 net earnings expected to exceed \$6.4 million.

### Yahoo! agrees to buy GeoCities for \$4.58b

NEW YORK (AP) — Yahoo! Inc. has announced that it is buying GeoCities Inc. for \$4.58 billion in a deal that creates the largest Web gateway and speeds the fevered spree of consolidations among Internet companies.

The deal gives Yahoo! another powerful brand name while helping GeoCities reach more Web users.

"We anticipate maintaining GeoCities as a stand-alone, very, very strong brand. There's a lot of brand equity in this company," said Tim Koogle, Yahoo!'s chief executive officer.

Yahoo!, based in Santa Clara, California, already has a minority investment in GeoCities, a

San Francisco company that provides space for Web pages created by individuals.

Dealmaking has accelerated recently in the Internet business even as the stock market has pushed the prices of many companies to new highs.

At Home Corp. agreed this month to buy Yahoo! competitor Excite Inc. in a deal valued at \$6.7 billion. America Online Inc. agreed last fall to buy Netscape Communications Corp. for about \$4.2 billion.

The deal puts pressure on Lycos Inc., the fourth most visited Web site, to find a partner in the fast-shrinking pool of independent search and directory services, known as portals.

A.F.M TRADE Saturday, 30-01-99  
ACCESS 4646868

Company	Open Price	Close Price	Change
<b>BANKS</b>			
ARAB BK	213.000	214.500	+ 0.70%
INTL BK	1.570	1.500	- 0.68%
BK. OF JO	1.190	1.250	+ 5.04%
INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK	1.510	1.470	- 2.63%
THE HOUSING BK	2.700	2.740	+ 1.48%
JO. KUWAIT BK	1.850	1.850	0.00%
JO. ISLAMIC BK	1.880	1.700	- 1.19%
JO. INVEST.&FIN. BK	1.340	1.340	0.00%
PHILADELPHIA BK	0.520	0.530	+ 1.92%
<b>BANKS INDEX</b>			
	280.330	point =	+ 0.74%
<b>SERVICES</b>			
ELECTRIC POWER	1.860	1.700	+ 2.41%
HOTEL & TOURISM	10.400	9.880	- 5.00%
VEHICLES OWNERS	2.690	2.590	- 0.00%
PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	0.800	0.800	0.00%
AL-RAI	5.600	5.650	+ 0.89%
AL-ZARQA FOR EDU	0.900	0.910	+ 1.11%
ARAB INTL FOR INVEST.	1.520	1.520	0.00%
UNIFIED LAND TRANS	1.720	1.130	+ 0.89%
UNITED FOR FINANCIAL	1.770	1.110	+ 5.13%
<b>SERVICES INDEX</b>			

## Hingis combats Mauresmo power for third Open title

MELBOURNE (R) — Martina Hingis won her third consecutive Australian Open women's singles title when she outclassed unseeded Frenchwoman Amelie Mauresmo 6-2, 6-3 in an emotion-charged final on Saturday.

The Swiss teenager locked a brave Mauresmo out of a one-sided match by taking the ball early to neutralise her nervous opponent's power and topspin.

Mauresmo's courage shone when she saved six championship points against her serve in an enthralling final game, only to succumb on the seventh with a netted low forehand volley.

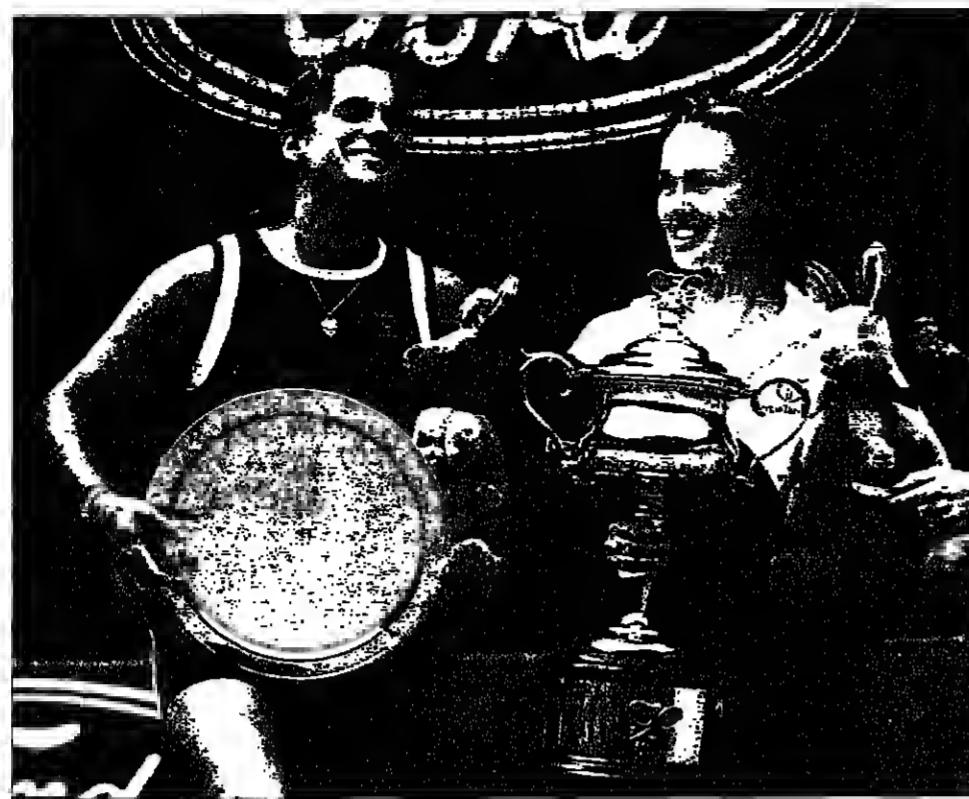
But the final and post-match celebrations were dogged by a continuing spate over comments by second seed Hingis and World No. 1 Lindsay Davenport likening Mauresmo to a man in a distracting lead-up to the final.

"Both of them apologised, so I don't want to talk about it any more," Mauresmo told reporters after her first grand slam final appearance.

The powerfully-built Mauresmo fought back from one set down to upset Davenport in the semifinals, stunning the top seed with her raw power.

Davenport later said she thought at times she was playing a man, a theme taken up later by Hingis.

The comments sparked a flurry of local media interest in Mauresmo and her relationship with girlfriend Sylvie Bourdon, whom Mauresmo thanked after



Second seeded Martina Hingis (R) of Switzerland displays her trophy and kangaroo mascot after winning her third consecutive Australian Open title by defeating unseeded Amelie Mauresmo (L) of France in the final of the 1999 Australian Open in Melbourne Saturday. Defending champion Hingis defeated Mauresmo in straight sets 6-2, 6-3 (AFP photo)

the final.

"Thank you Christophe, thank you Sylvie for being here with me. I love you both and maybe next time, I hope," Mauresmo said in French to Bourdon and to coach Christophe Fournier after accepting the runner-up's silver plate.

Davenport, on Friday accused the media of taking her comments out of context. Hingis has denied she had said to German reporters on Thursday that Mauresmo was "half a man" and flatly refused to say any more after the final.

"It's just between me and her. What's going on besides that, nobody needs to know," Hingis told reporters.

Hounded off court by local television crews, World No. 29 Mauresmo was out-thought on it by a clinical Hingis.

The Swiss second seed fought back from 0-40 down in the eighth game of the second set to enforce what proved to be a crucial advantage after the finalists twice swapped service breaks earlier in the set.

Then came the remarkable final game when Hingis repeatedly planted

winners to all corners of the court, only for the 1996 world junior champion to claw back from the brink with winners of her own.

The 19-year-old drew Mauresmo into long rallies to dictate the course of points in the early stages of the match and broke her serve twice in a lopsided opening set.

"The score at the end pretty much says how it was, I made the important points better," Hingis said.

"This time I was more experienced and that helped me a lot," Mauresmo clawed back from two match points

against her in her opening round match against American Corina Morariu.

She showed the same fighting spirit against Hingis, as well as brief flourishes of the form that saw her upset Davenport and seeded players Patty Schnyder and Dominique Van Roost en route to the final.

Hingis countered with deft service placement, net rushes and astute choice of shots in patient rallies.

Mauresmo conceded that Hingis had too much experience for her, a factor which told on the big points.

"I'm going to learn how to deal with a grand slam final.

It's a lot of pressure, a lot of tension," she said.

The win gave Hingis her fifth grand slam singles title after winning Wimbledon and the U.S. Open in 1997. It was also her sixth Australian title, her three successive singles titles matched by three straight doubles wins.

The match was the first Australian Open final between two teenagers since Margaret Smith beat Jan Lehane in 1961.

Mauresmo can take some comfort from the fact her performance in Melbourne will catapult her into the top 20 in the world rankings.

Hingis, however, will fall a few points short of overtaking Davenport as number one in the next rankings list due out on Monday.

Davenport took the top spot from Hingis after beating her in last year's U.S. Open final.



Martina Hingis of Switzerland celebrates setting up match point during her win over Amelie Mauresmo in the women's final at the Australian Open (AFP photo)

## Rafter-Bjorkman win doubles against Paes and Bhupathi

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Patrick Rafter got his first Grand Slam title on home soil while Jonas Bjorkman defended the doubles championship he won last year with Jacco Eltingh.

But for Indians Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi, Saturday's five-set loss in the Australian Open men's doubles championship was just another in a long line of devastating Grand Slam defeats.

"Sure we're disappointed because we fought like hell to even the match at two sets all," said Bhupathi. "Hopefully we'll take it a step further next time." Rafter and Bjorkman, the fifth seeds, received rowdy support from combined Australia-Sweden cheer squad and scored a thrilling 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-7 (10-12), 6-4 win.

Paes and Bhupathi, the top seeds and playing a 10th Slam together, had lost all four Grand Slam semifinals they played in before this tournament.

Bjorkman and Eltingh knocked out Paes and Bhupathi in last year's Australian Open semifinals and the Swedes joined up with Rafter after Eltingh's retirement.

Rafter, the No. 4 singles player, and Bjorkman, who was No. 4 at the end of 1997, make an impressive doubles team and reached the semifinals at last year's Wimbledon and French Open championships.

Rafter, the two-time U.S. Open singles champion, was overjoyed to take a trophy in front of home fans, who engaged in synchronized cheering along with the Swedish supporters.

"This is the first time I've been up here in front of you guys and I've always dreamed of this," Rafter told the crowd.

"I never thought it would be in the doubles but let's hope it's in the singles. I might get it one year."

Later, Rafter said the reception from the crowd made him feel "happier out there than winning the

second U.S. Open." Rafter and Bjorkman started strongly and raced through the first set. The Indians fought back by breaking Rafter at 4-5 to claim the second set but Paes lost his opening serve of the third set.

Rafter lost his serve at 2-1 but Paes, the weaker of the pair all match, lost his serve again in the ninth game, allowing Bjorkman to serve out the set.

The fourth set went all the way on serve, although the Indians had a set point on Rafter's serve at 4-5.

The tiebreaker was a tense battle with the teams trading mini-breaks. Rafter and Bjorkman had a match-point to the breaker but Paes put in a strong serve to get his team back on level terms before it finished off the set.

The only break of serve in the fifth, on Paes' serve at 4-5, was enough to give away the title. Rafter's volley on a second match point ended the contest.

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## Kafelnikov the unlikely underdog in final

MELBOURNE (R) — Former French Open champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov will be the unlikely underdog on Sunday when he comes up against Swedish danger man Thomas Enqvist in the Australian Open men's final.

Until this week, Enqvist had never progressed past the quarter-finals of a grand slam tournament.

Yet Enqvist has beaten the Russian 10th seed in straight sets in their two previous meetings in finals, has an overall 4-2 head-to-head advantage, and is the hottest player on tour with an 11-match winning streak.

"Hopefully I will get my chances, but I feel like I'm definitely the underdog," Kafelnikov said after routing German Tommy Haas in the semifinals.

In the absence of Pete Sampras, with the withdrawal of Marcelo Rios and Goran Ivanisevic, and with the premature defeat of big names

such as Carlos Moya and Pat Rafter, the men's tournament has been a disappointment for organisers hoping to draw in the crowds with big names.

But the final could have been much worse. A few days ago there was the possibility of Haas meeting Ecuadorean Nicolas Lapent in a veritable battle of the unknowns.

Kafelnikov and Enqvist have quite a lot in common.

Both of them are 24 and both have been top 10 players. The hard-working Kafelnikov has won 17 of 30 career finals. Enqvist an impressive 14 of 17 including the Adelaide hardcourt title three weeks ago.

Both also endured poor years in 1998 before dragging themselves back into form. Enqvist warmed up for the Australian Open with wins in Adelaide and in an exhibition event in Melbourne. Kafelnikov fin-

ished off 1998 by making the final at two of his last three tournaments.

"In '98 it was a disaster year for me, except the last three weeks of the year," Kafelnikov said.

"You know, the year-closing was perfect and right after that I knew I was coming back."

"That's why I'm ready to win again, to win a big tournament."

This is the best opportunity, probably, in a grand slam that I ever had to win." In an effort to get his game back on track, Kafelnikov hired a new coach, Larry Stefani, and the first thing they worked on was his serve.

That is that aspect of the game that Kafelnikov is banking on to win the final.

"Without a serve you cannot win the match, you cannot win the tournament," he said.

For Enqvist there were few

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## ITF considering appeal against Korda let-off

MELBOURNE (R) — The International Tennis Federation (ITF) is considering appealing against a British High Court decision stopping it from trying to ban Petr Korda for a positive dope test.

But ITF communications manager Alun James also said the federation might consider dropping the matter because of the damage it was doing to the game.

"We need to sit down with our partners in this, and think about what is best for the game of tennis," James told Reuters at the Australian Open on Saturday.

"Our other options could include a relook at the rules to see if there are other areas that need tightening up. Whichever way we go, we'll need to learn the lessons from this case." The

ITF had appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) after its own independent appeals panel decided not to suspend Korda when he tested positive for steroids at Wimbledon last year.

But Korda's lawyers successfully argued that the federation did not have the right, under its own rules, to lodge an appeal with the International Olympic Committee-established CAS. James said the ITF had 28 days to decide whether or not it would proceed with an appeal but first wanted to discuss the case with the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) and the Women's Tennis Association (WTA).

"The ITF is disappointed," he said. "We felt that the right body to consider this was the Court of Arbitration for Sport and because of a legal technical-

ity we've not been able to present it to them, or at least currently we don't look like we've able to present it to them.

"But we have been given permission from the judge to appeal his decision to the Court of Appeal in London and that's something we are considering." The ITF appealed to the CAS because it felt its own investigating committee had mis-applied anti-doping regulations by merely taking away the ranking points and the prize money Korda earned at Wimbledon and not suspending him after he tested positive for the banned steroid nandrolone.

But the judge agreed with Korda's legal team when they argued that the ITF did not have the right to challenge a decision by its own appeals body. The judge said: "It is difficult to

believe it could be intended that there should be a second full scale appeal with the enormous costs, inconvenience to the parties and witnesses and delay which this would involve." The decision by the ITF's own committee not to suspend Korda angered his fellow players and many of them gave him the cold shoulder as he sought to defend his title at the Australian Open this week. But James said the case had been beneficial because it had strengthened the ITF's resolve to increase its penalties for serious doping offenders.

"We will definitely be recommending an increase for class one substances from one year to two years," James said.

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**ALWAD MAHROUS TBA' AL WAZIR**  
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**CINEMA TEL: 5699238**  
**PLAZA**  
Comedian Mohammad Huneidi ... in  
**SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY**  
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# End to an entertaining Super Bowl week

MIAMI (AP) — National Football League coaches rarely pass for standup comics, particularly at the Super Bowl. Yet Mike Shanahan and Dan Reeves went in a jovial mood Friday as they wrapped up a week of entertaining buildup to Sunday's title game.

Granted, most of the entertainment was provided by the Broncos' Shannon Sharpe and the Falcons' Ray Buchanan. But Shanahan put their dressing room into perspective:

"If you take Shannon Sharpe out of the equation, we have been very quiet," said Shanahan, whose defending champions are seven-point favorites to become the first AFC repeater since the 1980 game. "Now if we didn't have Shannon Sharpe, there would be everybody in this room complaining about there was nothing exciting to write about or talk about."

Reeves talked about long-gone days when he was playing for championships.

"I watched the Ice Bowl game the other day or the other night, actually," Reeves said, referring to the NFL title game in 1967, played in subzero temperatures at Green Bay. "I couldn't sleep. Those stories have gotten so much better through the years. I am a much better player than I was back to 1965. So it's amazing to hear some of the stories."



Commissioner Paul Tagliabue wasn't telling story, but he had plenty to talk about shortly after the coaches finished their monologues.

He discussed the likelihood of instant replay returning to help officials — he almost guaranteed its passage at the March league meetings — and endorsed Lawrence Taylor for the Hall of Fame.

"We, a lot of people in the National Football League, by jumping on the officials ... we got into shooting ourselves in the foot dealers," he said, noting that, in general, the quality of officiating "is as good as it's ever been."

"I think we will have replay when we come out of the league meeting in March."

He also said he believes Taylor, eligible for the Hall of Fame for the first time, will make it. There has been considerable debate about whether



Actress and recording star Cher poses for photographers at Miami's Pro Player Stadium during a press conference in Miami Jan. 29. Cher will sing the national anthem prior to the start of the Super Bowl. The defending champion Broncos will play the Atlanta Falcons in Super Bowl XXXIII Jan. 31 (Reuters photo)

Taylor's off-field problems will derail his entry in Saturday's voting.

"I think he should," be in the Hall, Tagliabue said. "And I say that without

qualification..."

The Broncos and the Falcons, meantime, held their final practices. Reeves placed Dave Widell, Rod Monroe,



Omar Brown and Darren Anderson on the inactive list.

"That's one of the things I struggled the most with," Reeves said. "I can't understand why you can't at least have them dress out."

Not dressing for Denver will be Justin Armour, Chris Banks, Cyron Brown and Troy Teague.

They weren't required to do interviews, so Sharpe and Buchanan couldn't insult each other again through the media.

Their trash talk almost overshadowed some other topics, including the feud involving Reeves and John Elway and Shanahan; the likelihood this will be John Elway's last game; and the novelty of having the Falcons in their first Super Bowl.

Reeves, of course, has been in more of these games than anyone. This will be his ninth, but he's lost all three as a

coach — with the Broncos.

"I don't think there is any question that it would be more gratifying to win as a coach," said Reeves, who has overseen a remarkable Atlanta turnaround from 3-13 in 1996, the year before he arrived, to 16-2 this season. "Now maybe I wouldn't say that if I had won my first one, because I can remember how gratifying it was to win that first Super Bowl after struggling and being there so closely with Dallas."

"But I think when you go through and have lost three and you feel like you let everybody down, because that is your responsibility as head coach ... it would mean more as a coach than it did when I was a player."

Shanahan was on Reeves' Denver staff for those super flops in the 1987, '89 and '90 games. Now, he's dealing with history.

Before last year's win over the Packers, no AFC team had even won a league title since the 1983 season. Beating Atlanta would stamp these Broncos as one of the NFL's best.

"I thought our guys stepped up and wanted to make themselves special this year by going out and proving that last year wasn't a fluke," Shanahan said. "Character, that is where it starts, in everything we do."

## Spanish sharpshooter Castillejo wins WBC title

LEGANES, Spain (AP) — Spain's Javier Castillejo hardly lived up to his nickname of El Lince — the Sharpshooter — but did enough to win the World Boxing Council super-welterweight world title on Saturday.

Locally-born Castillejo, 30, fighting in a Madrid industrial suburb, substituted energy for accuracy and took the belt on a split points decision from reigning champion Keith Mullings of the United States.

After twelve rounds of entertaining, if not enthralling, boxing the judges' verdict announced as: 114-115, 114-114, 112-116 (Mullings' points listed first).

The result meant that Spain had its first world champion to more than 20 years, Ugo Lastra being the last to hold such an accolade before losing the WBC featherweight crown to Eusebio Pedroza in April 1978.

Mullings, who had held the title since December 1997, could hardly complain at the decision despite the close result.

The first two rounds were even but after that Castillejo, who started the fight as the underdog, was always ahead.

Castillejo could possibly have resolved the fight earlier, with



European champion Javier Castillejo from Spain (L) fights against American World Champion Keith Mullings at Madrid January 29. Castillejo scored a point victory over Mullings to win the World Boxing Council light middleweight crown.

Mullings looking in trouble during the seventh round, but instead opted for some extravagant showboating.

The Spaniard's antics won him loud cheers from his partisan Spanish supporters, who occupied most of the seating

around the converted bullring, but dismayed the neutrals in the audience.

Castillejo took his career record to 44-4 while Mullings drops to 16-5-1.

The victor's next opponent is undecided but the most likely candidate is

the American fighter Oscar De La Hoya, the undisputed welterweight champion of the world and rated one of the best pound-for-pound boxers around, who will without doubt provide Castillejo with more problems than the dour Mullings.

## IOC targets more members in Salt Lake, Sydney

NEW YORK (AP) — More IOC members have been targeted in the Olympics' biggest corruption scandal, which now covers Sydney as well as Salt Lake, the committee's chief investigator said Friday.

IOC vice president Dick Pound said an "indefinite number" of names from the 106 committee members have been added to the inquiry since its initial report on the Salt Lake City case was released Sunday.

Pound refused to identify the recent additions to an investigation that already has led to the expulsion or resignation of nine members, the biggest purge in the IOC's 105 years.

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Besides the resignations and expulsions announced Sunday, the IOC said three members remained under investigation and a fourth member was warned.

As Pound's group was finishing its "first sweep" of Salt Lake, word came that the head of the Australian Olympic Committee promised dls 70,000 to two African IOC members the night before Sydney won the 2000 Games by two votes over Beijing.

One of those members, Charles Mukora of Kenya, also was implicated in the Salt Lake case and has resigned. The other member was identified as Francis

Nyangweso of Uganda.

Pound said it was "safe to assume" his commission was now looking at member involvement with the Sydney bid.

He also expects to look at the failed 1996 bid of Toronto, where officials said Thursday they spent more than dls 500,000 to cover the cost of IOC members breaking or stretching rules.

"I would imagine that they would now come forward with names and details," Pound said.

And he said the IOC investigation of Salt Lake remained open, based on a full review of reports from the independent Utah ethics panel.

Pound said he had no information on Austin Sealey, an IOC member from Barbados who was identified in Friday's Washington Post as a possible recipient of money from Salt Lake that was not evident in initial reviews.

The Salt Lake Tribune, meanwhile, said investigators had subpoenaed University of Utah records of Bold Magyan, a son of IOC member Shagedjary Magyan of Mongolia.

In Paris, Jean-Claude Ganga of the Republic of Congo said he had 40 members who would like to reinstate him to the IOC at a special assembly in March. Pound said such a reversal probably would force the ruling executive board, of which he is a member, to resign.

"That would be a serious point of non-confidence," Pound said. He said he would be "very surprised" if the expulsions were overturned.

When he announced the expulsions, IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch said all bid cities from the 1996 Games onward would be asked to identify members who acted improperly in the bidding.

Pound said those letters were to be mailed from IOC headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland, on Friday, with a Feb. 16 deadline to reply, about two weeks later than originally intended but still in time for the investigations to be

finished by the special session March 17-18.

And in another of the six investigations of Olympic bidding around the world, the U.S. Olympic Committee said the report of its special inquiry on Salt Lake, led by former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, would be released March 1.

In other developments: —USA Today said Ganga and former Salt Lake Olympics chief Tom Welch shared a bank account. Welch's lawyer, Tom Schaeffer, said Welch's name was on the account so he could get funds for Ganga if Ganga was out of the country. Welch, the lawyer added, never made a deposit or withdrawal from the account.

—Ganga told the French newspaper Liberation that Samaranch was sacrificing friends in the scandal to try to clear his own name.

—Samaranch resigned as president of La Caixa, Spain's fourth-largest bank. The 78-year-old IOC president said he was leaving because of his age, not the scandal.

—Sergio Santander, expelled from the IOC in the Salt Lake case, was suspended as president of the Chilean Olympic Committee.

—Two proprietors of a defunct Salt Lake escort service told the Tribune their escorts entertained IOC members at hotels during visits in 1995. They did not say who paid for the escorts.

—A Browning rifle given to Samaranch by Salt Lake organizers is worth much more than the dls 671 listed KTVN in Salt Lake reported. Leon Burrows, who designed the gun's engraving, told the TV station the gun could sell for up to dls 25,000.

—The Olympics' top TV organizer, Manolo Ríos, reportedly was paid dls 1.5 million for his services during the 1992 Barcelona Games. Spanish sports authorities defended Barcelona's finances against the report in the newspaper El Mundo.

## Bordeaux give Marseille footballing lesson

PARIS (AP) — Girondins Bordeaux lived up to their reputation as the best footballing side in France with a stunning 4-1 demolition of Olympique Marseille. Bordeaux scored four goals in the opening half hour to settle the issue early in Friday night's top-of-the-table clash at their Parc Lescure World Cup stadium.

The two teams are now equal on points in the French league title race with Bordeaux ahead on goal difference.

Bordeaux, knowing they needed victory more than Marseille, said before the match they wanted above all to play well and enjoy it. And they achieved just that.

"My team did what they set out to do," coach Elie Baup said.

"This quality of play meant little went to waste and there were four goals to boot. To succeed in this way against Marseille, who are a great team, is even more convincing."

"We defended going forward because we did not fear this (Marseille) team." Marseille fell into the Bordeaux trap by sticking to tactics that have brought them much success this season with a three-man midfield and four men up front.

Bordeaux overwhelmed the Marseille midfield with the skills of their creative pair Ali Benarbia, a French champion, and winner with Monaco in 1997, Johan Micoud.

which had conceded only 13 goals in their previous 21 matches, was found wanting for speed.

The Bordeaux attack, including joint first division top scorers Sylvain Wiltord and Lilian Laslandes, made light of Marseille's midfield buffer and hit them with quick, thrusting passes and constant changes of approach.

With former Bordeaux, Monaco and Sheffield Wednesday defender Patrick Blendeau unavailable through injury, Marseille coach Rolland Courbis switched William Gallas to right back, leaving the left flank of defence exposed.

Courbis thought that, facing a two-pronged attack, three men at the back would be enough. But Marseille fell prey to Benarbia's superb exploitation of the spaces behind left-sided midfield-er Peter Luccin.

Former Bordeaux, Monaco and Sheffield Wednesday defender Patrick Blendeau unavailable through injury, Marseille coach Rolland Courbis switched William Gallas to right back, leaving the left flank of defence exposed.

"Luccin's injury posed a big problem for us," Courbis said. "He had an important role to play, at the same time half defender, half midfielder." Marseille captain Laurent Blanc summed up a sorry night for his side by saying:

"We've got to admit that Bordeaux were

## Coach of Kuwait's national team resigns

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Kuwait's football coach, Milan Macall, who guided the national team to two successive Gulf Cups and a second place in the Asian Games, has resigned citing financial reasons, newspapers reported Saturday.

The Czech national said he "several months in his country and to remain with his family after 17 years of foreign coaching work," the Arab Times said.

Macall, arrived in Kuwait in 1993 as coach of local club side Kazma, which he guided to several cup and league titles before being hired by the Kuwait Football Association to rebuild the national side.

Macall won two successive Gulf Cups — contested by Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — over the last four years.

He was in charge of Kuwait's team which were runners-up at the Asian Games in December, losing to World Cup finalists Iran.

The achievement saw Kuwait, where the national league is organised on an amateur basis, attain their highest-ever world ranking, 25th, by the International Football Federation (FIFA).

Macall's foursome of Kazuya Yoshioka, Hideharu Miyahira, Noriaki Kasai and Kazuyoshi Funaki handily won the team event with 976.5 points — the country's

events ever held.

Austria's team of Reinhard Schwarzenberger, Wolfgang Loitzl, Stefan Horngacher and Andreas Widhövel finished second with 903.8 points on their combined

seconds. But the presence of Schmitt, who has burst out of nowhere this season to become a top jumper, led to trains being delayed and trail-jumps as the huge crowd tried to reach the slope.

"The atmosphere was absolutely crazy. I had two super jumps — too bad it wasn't enough for a second place," said Schmitt.

Germany settled for third at 896.9 points with Schmitt, Sven Hannawald, Dieter Thoma and Hansjörg Jaekle. Norway was a distance fourth at 813.3 points, edging Finland at 805.5 while 4.

Norway's 813.3, 5. Finnland 805.5. Hannawald may have cost the Germans second when he unleashed a leap of 131.5 metres, but lost costly points by dropping a hand into the snow to prevent a spill on his landing.

Organisers are expecting 50,000 fans to attend Sunday's second singles. Kasai eded



Ferrari's German driver Michael Schumacher presents the new Formula One F399 Ferrari at the company headquarters at Maranello, central Italy Jan. 30. The F399 will participate at the upcoming F1 world championships (Reuters photo)

## Japan wins Ski Jumping Team World Cup but Schmitt stars

WILLINGEN, Germany (AP) — Olympic champion Japan captured a Ski Jumping Team World Cup competition Saturday, but Martin Schmitt stole the show in front of 40,000 spectators.

Schmitt, whose popularity in Germany drew the huge crowd, leaped to the day's best combined jumps of 132 and 131 metres but it wasn't enough for the Germans who finished third behind Japan and Austria.

Japan's foursome of Kazuya Yoshioka, Hideharu Miyahira, Noriaki Kasai and Kazuyoshi Funaki handily won the team event with 976.5 points — the country's

## Security Council meets to evaluate Iraq policy

Russia demands dismissal of Butler

UNITED NATIONS (R) — U.N. Security Council members met in a special Saturday session to resolve one last sticking point blocking agreement on a review of all aspects of Iraq's ties with the United Nations.

The United States and Russia disagreed on the role of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) and how it should participate on experts panels that would assess and possibly make recommendations on future policy.

Russia wants UNSCOM abolished and its executive chairman Richard Butler fired immediately, although Moscow says the commission's experts can provide information to the panels.

U.N. officials advocate an official role for the commission.

Russian Ambassador Sergey Lavrov said the two sides were close, but the issue had still not been resolved as council members met in small groups behind closed doors.

Council President Celso Amorim of Brazil said "We are hopeful to approve a text

during this weekend," implying there might be a Sunday meeting also.

He called the session in what he said was an effort to put the two delegations under pressure before Canada assumes the council presidency on Monday.

Most nations on the council are generally supportive of the panels as a first procedural step toward working out a new policy toward Iraq following the mid-December U.S.-British air strikes and Baghdad's barring of all weapons inspections.

Lavrov wanted the proposal to talk about the "experience and expertise" of the commission while the United States advocated "participation" of UNSCOM.

The United States and most council members have endorsed the Canadian proposal, with U.S. representative Peter Burleigh saying "there is a deep division on the council and going to the longer-term questions now is not useful."

So far Washington has not made any long-term proposals in the council on Iraq. Instead it is concentrating on how to remove President Saddam Hussein from power and on the almost-daily cat-and-mouse engagements over air exclusion zones in Iraq.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Assad meets Archbishop of Canterbury

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria's President Hafez Al Assad met the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, on Saturday for talks on the Middle East peace process and growing tension in the area, presidential spokesman Jibril Kourich said. Kourich said Carey led an Anglican church delegation to the talks which were attended by British ambassador to Damascus Basil Eastwood and Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara'a. Carey leaves on Sunday for Lebanon after a four-day official visit to Syria.

#### German woman released in Yemen

SANA (AFP) — Yemeni tribesmen have released a German woman they kidnapped on Tuesday, a spokesman for the Yemeni security services said Saturday. She was released on Friday, the spokesman said. The tribesmen had earlier set free her Yemeni husband, three children and brother-in-law. The woman's German mother and brother were still being detained. The group was abducted Tuesday night in northern Yemen and taken to the Barat region, 180 kilometres from the capital Sanaa, sources in the security services said. The woman, a midwife working in Yemen, was released so she could carry the kidnappers demands to the authorities, the spokesman said. At first, she was under orders to return to them, but the tribesmen later told the German embassy that she could remain free, be added.

#### Kurd party vows successor if closed

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's main Kurdish party said on Saturday a similar party would emerge if the Constitutional Court ordered its ban. Chief Prosecutor Vural Savas on Friday presented the court with a 56-page indictment against HADEP accusing it of acting as a recruiting centre for separatist Kurdish rebels. "This is a political case, not a legal one," HADEP Deputy Chairman Osman Ozcelik told a news conference. "HADEP [The People's Democracy Party] is not despairing and nor are its voters. If it is closed, there are enough people and ideas to establish HADEP in its place," he said. A statement by Savas said there was an organic link between HADEP and Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels who are fighting for self-rule in the mainly Kurdish southeast. HADEP advocates a negotiated settlement of the conflict.

#### Turkish troops kill 11 Kurd rebels

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Turkish troops killed 11 Kurdish guerrillas in clashes in the southeast of the country, security officials said on Saturday. A statement from the emergency rule governor's office said soldiers fought with Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels on Friday night in Sirnak province. More than 20,000 people have died in 14 years of conflict between the Turkish armed forces and the PKK, which is fighting for self-rule in the mainly Kurdish southeast.

#### Double suicide after child's murder

MUSCAT (AFP) — An Indian couple in Oman committed suicide after strangling their three-and-a-half-year-old child, police said Saturday. The police, quoted by the official news agency OANA, said the child's body was found with his hands tied on the bed of his family's home in Seeb province, near the capital. The mother and father hanged themselves from a ventilator and a suicide note was found, police added, without giving details of the family tragedy on Tuesday.

#### 'Eighty killed in dispute in Sudan'

KHARTOUM (R) — More than 80 people were killed and 36 injured this month in clashes between nomads and farmers over grazing rights in Sudan, a Khartoum newspaper said on Saturday. The private Al Rai Al Aam daily quoted a local villager and security officials as saying the clashes near the town of Gereina, some 1,000 kms west of Khartoum, were brought under control on Jan. 19.

#### Iranian, Egyptian FMs meet in Davos

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi has held talks with his Egyptian counterpart Amr Musa on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the official Iranian news agency IRNA reported Saturday. The two ministers in their talks on Friday discussed various issues, including the latest developments in Iraq, Israel and disarmament, it said, without giving details. They decided that the two Muslim countries will boost cooperation at international forums and revise a treaty on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the year 2000.

1990. The most controversial panel is one composed of UNSCOM.

International Atomic Energy Agency and other disarmament organisations which Russia eventually wants to put in place of the commission it accused of bias and lack of professionalism.

Lavrov wanted the proposal to talk about the "experience and expertise" of the commission while the United States advocated "participation" of UNSCOM.

The United States and most council members have endorsed the Canadian proposal, with U.S. representative Peter Burleigh saying "there is a deep division on the council and going to the longer-term questions now is not useful."

So far Washington has not made any long-term proposals in the council on Iraq. Instead it is concentrating on how to remove President Saddam Hussein from power and on the almost-daily cat-and-mouse engagements over air exclusion zones in Iraq.

**Palestinians ready for trilateral Washington meeting**

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Palestinian cabinet Saturday reaffirmed its agreement to attend three-way talks with Israel and the United States in Washington early next month despite Israeli resistance to the meeting.

"We have accepted the American initiative to go to a trilateral meeting in Washington" aimed at ending the deadlock in implementation of the Wye River peace accord, said chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat. "We will accept what the American administration will say, because we have implemented all our obligations and commitments," he added.

Israel has told the United States that it will not attend such a meeting because of what it claims are Palestinian violations of the Wye River land-for-security agreement.

The Israelis have said that they are not against the idea of a three-way meeting, but that the time is not right.

U.S. spokesman have said that such an initiative was on the table, but that no formal invitations had been issued for the talks.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has refused to carry out promised troop withdrawals from the West Bank required by the October agreement, citing what he says are Palestinian failures to honour their promise to crack down on anti-Israel activities in areas already under its control.

Deep divisions over Netanyahu's handling of the peace process led parliament last month to call early elections for May and early June and the campaign has further dampened hopes for progress.

There was no immediate confirmation from the



PROTESTERS SAY NO TO WTO: Demonstrators hold a banner which reads 'The WTO [World Trade Organisation] kills people' during a march Saturday by approximately 100 protesters through Davos, Switzerland, where the World Economic Forum is taking place (AP photo)

## U.S. envoys tour Gulf on Iraq mission

MANAMA (AFP) — U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Martin Indyk met Bahrain's emir here Saturday at the start of a Gulf tour to brief the regime on Washington's efforts to overthrow Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"I had the opportunity to explain to the emir [Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa] ... our approach which is based on three pillars," Indyk told reporters before flying off to Qatar.

He said they were to restore consensus in the U.N. Security Council, to expand the U.N. humanitarian programme for Iraq, and work for a change of government in Baghdad.

"The third pillar of our approach is a new pillar which is to seek a change in the regime in Iraq by sup-

porting the aspirations of the Iraqi people for a better existence under a more representative government," said Indyk.

He defended the U.S. and British enforcement of "no-fly zones" in both northern and southern Iraq that has sparked a series of U.S. air strikes since December.

The aim was to contain Saddam and "restrict his ability to threaten his people," said Indyk, who is assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs.

Bahrain, which is currently a non-permanent member of the Security Council and also serves as a Gulf base of the U.S. Fifth Fleet, on Friday joined Malaysian criticism at the United Nations of the exclusion zones.

The zones had been "arbitrarily" imposed and "run counter to the U.N. charter," charged Malaysia.

On the heels of a visit to Saudi Arabia by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Indyk was due in Kuwait on Sunday along with Frank Ricciardone, newly-named U.S. special representative for transition of Iraq.

"They will hold talks with senior Kuwaiti officials on Iraq, the Middle East peace process and other issues of bilateral concern," said a U.S. embassy spokesman in Kuwait City.

Kuwait's leading newspaper, Al Qabas, said the United States was aiming to set up five camps near Iraq's borders to train some 10,000 opposition fighters, the official Qatari news agency QNA reported.

## 'Algeria rebels kill seven soldiers'

ALGIERS (R) — Seven Algerian soldiers died when a band of Islamists sprayed a military convoy with machine-guage fire in an ambush, a local newspaper said Saturday.

About 100 rebels, hiding on both sides of the road, attacked the convoy near a forest in the Relizane area, 260 kilometres west of Algiers, La Tribune daily said.

The guerrillas then snatched weapons and uniforms from the soldiers, seven of whom were wounded, and fled into nearby woodland, it said.

Le Quotidien d'Oran, carrying a report on Wednesday's ambush, said the rebels were members of the Armed Islamic Group, Algeria's most radical Islamist guerrillas.

The ambush was the latest in a series of attacks on troops in the past 14 months in which more than 50 soldiers have been killed.

At least 16 soldiers were killed and 11 wounded in two ambushes two weeks ago in the Tizi-Ouzou area, 90 kilometres east of Algiers, and in the Taret region, 220 kilometres southwest of the capital.

There was no immediate confirmation from the

authorities, who are tight-tipped on casualties among government forces.

In another incident, government security forces said on Saturday Islamists had slit the throats of five people overnight in a hamlet in western Algeria. The killings took place in the Bekhia village in Chlef province, 160 kilometres west of Algiers, the security forces said in a statement carried by the official Algerian news agency APS.

Chief province is one of the main hotbeds of violence in Algeria. At least 50 villagers were killed in a rebel raid in December two weeks ago, it said.

Le Quotidien d'Oran, carrying a report on Wednesday's ambush, said the rebels were members of the Armed Islamic Group, Algeria's most radical Islamist guerrillas.

The ambush was the latest in a series of attacks on troops in the past 14 months in which more than 50 soldiers have been killed.

Algeria has been racked by violence since early 1992 when the authorities cancelled a general election in which radical Islamists had taken a commanding lead.

More than 65,000 people — civilians, rebels and troops — have been killed in the seven past years, according to Western estimates.

There was no immediate confirmation from the

## Israeli 'spies' could get up to three years in jail in Cyprus

NICOSIA (AP) — Two Israeli whose spying charges were replaced by less serious counts in a plea bargain deal could be looking at two to three years in prison, a Cypriot legal source said Saturday.

But even a custodial sentence for Udi Hargov and Igali Damary may not entirely dismiss suspicions that Cyprus struck the deal under outside pressure. Opposition politicians have accused the government of humiliating the country as a result of the deal.

Attorney General Alecos Markides, however, insists that dropping the spying and conspiracy charges, under which each of the two could have gotten a maximum of 10 years in jail, had nothing to do with outside interference.

"I believe under the circumstances that our side moved correctly and it was done in the public interest. It's a satisfactory result," he said.

But Markides appeared to contradict his own version when he disclosed that his Israeli counterpart, Elyakim Rubinstein, had been to Cyprus twice since the Nov. 6 arrest of the two men to discuss the case.

He also said that President Glafcos Clerides and Foreign

Minister Yiannakis Cassiolides had been approached about the case by the Israeli government, several U.S. senators and a cabinet minister from a European Union country that he did not name.

Hargov, 37, and Damary, 49, had the conspiracy and spying charges against them dropped on Friday. In return, they changed their plea to guilty on a charge of illegal possession of telecommunications equipment and entered the same plea to a new charge of approaching a restricted area. They are to appear in court on Monday for sentencing.

The first charge carries a maximum penalty of one year imprisonment, while the second a maximum sentence of six years in jail.

"The two can realistically expect to be jailed for two or maybe three years," said the legal source who is close to the case. He spoke on condition of anonymity.

He said he partly based his predication of a custodial sentence on the grounds that the defence had produced nothing to prove that they were indeed on the island not to spy.

WELLINGTON (R) — Couples seeking the ultimate status symbol of a baby born at the dawn of the year 2000 should seek to conceive on April 9, a New Zealand newspaper reported. That matches up with the length of a human pregnancy.

Richard Fisher, co-author of the book 'Making Babies,' told the Manukau Evening News. "However, he acknowledged the chance of having one of the first babies born in the year 2000 was only around six per cent, even if the April date was acted upon. But Fisher had a tip to help improve the chances — plenty of sex beforehand for the father.

**Poets take to the confessional**

LONDON (R) — Like sinners consulting a priest, aspiring British poets are being given a chance to take to the confessional to see if their odes are any good. Professional poet Ian Duhig is to man the confessional-style booth at poetry workshops being staged in northern England. "A lot of people are embarrassed about their poetry," said Robert Walters of Bradford Libraries Service, who came up with the idea. "Half an hour of a professional poet's time in confidence, seemed a good offer to make to people who normally only read to families and friends," he told Saturday's Daily Telegraph.

### Beggar turns out to be wealthy landlady

CAIRO (AFP) — An old woman in her 80s, arrested while begging in central Cairo, turned out not to be as poor as she appeared, a court discovered on Saturday. Zeinab Madbouli, 81, told police she was forced to beg to feed herself, but when asked to empty her pockets, among items that fell out was a contract showing her to be the owner of a block of flats. No longer able to sustain her story, she admitted owning two more buildings in working class districts of the capital, acquired over a lifetime of begging in the streets. The court put her wealth at some \$100,000.

### Women protest ambassador's chic cheek

WELLINGTON (APP) — It's not the first time a group of New Zealanders has protested in outrage at the French. But unlike previous groups which have protested against the now-closed French nuclear testing in the Pacific, some 20 angry women on the streets of Wellington on Friday were protesting against something more personal — differences on dress sense. Departing French Ambassador Jacques Le Blanc has aroused the ire of the capital's women by slapping their fashion sense, telling the Wellington Dominion newspaper Friday they dressed "like soldiers" and gave "the impression of wanting to look like men."

### Prison turned hotel now cosy and hospitable

LUCERNE (APP) — A one-time prison in the central Swiss town of Lucerne has been converted into a bargain hotel and cultural centre, and will open its doors April 1, the Swiss news agency ATS said. The 160-bed hotel, whose decor theme is, not surprisingly, "bare and bare," will offer competitive prices, charging \$14.25 for the cheapest room, according to ATS. The new hotel, called Loewengraben (The Lions' Den), is targeting a young and budget clientele, a market that has remained largely untapped in touristy, and pricey, Lucerne.

**Instructions for a Millennium baby**

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## Yemen court hears call for media ban in trial of bomb suspects

ADEN (R) — The prosecution called Saturday for a media ban on the second day of the trial of five British Muslims and an Algerian accused of plotting a New Year's Eve bombing campaign in this southern Yemeni city.

Two policemen, meanwhile, told the court in Aden that explosives and arms were found in a car rented by the suspects,